The Message and Program

of the

Christian Religion

GLENN McRAE

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
FEB 4 1931
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BV 1533 .M33 1930
McRae, Glenn, 1887-1963.
The message and program of
the Christian religion

FEB 4 1931
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE MESSAGE AND PROGRAM
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION

BY

GLENN McRAE

Editor Young People's Literature,
Christian Board of Publication

*Approved by the Curriculum Committee of the
United Christian Missionary Society as a
Textbook for Unit 5 of the Standard
Leadership Training
Curriculum*

THE BETHANY PRESS
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Copyright 1930
Glenn McRae

Printed in the United States of America.

TO

MY WIFE

THE COMPANION OF ALL MY EFFORTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. THE MESSAGE - - - - - - - - 13

II. THE PROGRAM - - - - - - - - 34

III. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM OF THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT 51

IV. THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIVING - - - 73

V. BUILDING A PROGRAM FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH - - - - - - - - - 93

VI. LIFE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH - - - - 113

VII. THE FAMILY AND THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH - - - - - - - - - 135

VIII. THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY - - - - - - 150

IX. FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHURCHES - 164

X. MAKING ECONOMIC LIFE CHRISTIAN - - 179

XI. THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAM AND THE HOMELAND - - - - - - - - - - 201

XII. INTO ALL THE WORLD - - - - - - 223

INTRODUCTION

The religion of Christ is a way of life based upon a faith. What are the fundamental, abiding elements in this faith? What must one really believe as a basis of Christlike conduct? How must a person live in order to manifest this Christlike faith? In what way or ways should the person who definitely accepts the religion of Christ differ from other persons?

Christianity does not provide a complete set of rules to guide one's conduct in meeting the problems and situations which constantly arise in the complex life of today. It does provide a few basic principles and ideals through the intelligent exercise of which our lives may achieve that glorious abundance, completeness and worthfulness which characterized the life of the Master. What are these abiding principles? And how may they be intelligently expressed?

The author addresses himself to these important questions. The book has grown out of years of actual experience in facing these problems with local church groups. The author expresses the results of sound and constructive scholarship in practical terms and everyday language. The easy and non-technical style makes the book very readable. Its growth out of actual experience in facing the problems with local groups makes it lend itself admirably to class discussions. The author has gone below the surface and rediscovered and re-emphasized certain fundamental Christian principles which, if intelligently practiced, would revolutionize and revitalize many Christian churches and enterprises.

The National Leadership Training Committee of the Disciples of Christ very heartily endorses this book and approves it as the text for Unit 5 of the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum. It should be used not only in standard leadership schools and classes, but also as an elective course for young people and adults. The book will commend itself to all church leaders who want to honestly face the task of Christianity today.

M. E. SADLER,
Secretary of Religious Education,
United Christian Missionary Society

FOREWORD

The outline of this discussion of the message and program of the Christian religion is a result of numerous teaching experiences with Unit 5 of the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum. Many ideas developed here have been shaped in the give and take of class work. The manner of presenting the theme was worked out in these enjoyable teaching situations where the writer with a group of Christian workers sought to discover the message and program of the Christian religion.

The author takes this means of acknowledging his indebtedness to Dr. M. E. Sadler, secretary in the Department of Religious Education, United Christian Missionary Society, for a careful reading of the manuscript and for his many helpful criticisms. The book has been strengthened at many points because of his suggestions.

While this volume has been prepared for use as a textbook, the interests of the general reader have not been overlooked. It is hoped that many not in formal classes will be helped to a fuller appreciation of the Christian enterprise. The mere reading of the glory and obligation of the Christian religion may inspire some to seek a larger share in carrying it forward.

To the Teacher

Manifestly, a text, unless it is developed as a symposium reflects the attitude of its writer. The teacher will bear this in mind and seek other points of view. In the writing of this book no attempt has been made to quote from numerous authors on the various topics treated. However, their works are listed in the bibliographies appended to each chapter and should be consulted by the teacher.

The suggestions offered below should be treated as a stimulus to thought. In no way should they be used as a substitute for original planning.

The writer in teaching this theme secured the best results when attention was directed to the local church and its share in the Kingdom enterprise. A classified list of the sayings and attitudes of Jesus with respect to the various areas of human living has not been the primary objective sought. Rather an understanding of the obligations and possibilities of the local church and of the individual in the present-day Kingdom task has been the outcome desired.

The text is constructed according to a definite scheme. First, the great essentials of Jesus' message are sought. Then his program and that of his followers are outlined. A brief sketch of the program of the Christian movement as it developed through the centuries is given. This is followed by a discussion of how one may follow the Christian way. At this point the local church and its share in the Christian enterprise become the theme. The life of the congregation, the family, the community, co-operation with other congregations and religious bodies, the economic order, national problems, and the world task are successively treated. The theme is the local church expressing itself to the ends of the earth.

Scripture passages preface every chapter. Footnotes call attention to many more. Classes should explore these as far as time permits. A few questions precede each chapter. These are meant to call attention to the salient points discussed. Lists of topics and questions are appended to each chapter to stimulate further investigation and to indicate contrary points of view. The bibliographies are selected and in nowise represent completeness. They merely list works that have been helpful to the author and will be useful to those who would study further.

The writer has found it profitable to ask his students to prepare at least two papers for the course. In the first paper the student was asked to outline the present program of the local church of which he was a member. In the other he was requested to outline the program for his church as it should be in the light of his study of the Christian message and program. The first paper compels the student to know what his church is actually doing and the second to determine its share of the total task of bringing Christ to the world. If properly done, these papers will require work sufficient to satisfy credit requirements.

If this text proves a serviceable instrument for the teacher of the Christian message and enterprise and helps the student to a vision of his share in the Kingdom task, the writer will be satisfied.

G. M.

St. Louis, Mo., September, 1930.

CHAPTER I

THE MESSAGE

SCRIPTURES

MARK 1:15.—The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.

MATTHEW 7:21.—Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

MARK 10:43, 44.—But whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is the "good news"?
2. What do you understand by an "experience of God"?
3. Why is the conception of God as love frequently a stumblingblock?
4. What was Jesus' attitude toward the Law? the prophets? the oral tradition?
5. What did Jesus teach about sin? immortality?
6. What different ideas of the Kingdom were held in Jesus' day?

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION?

Any satisfactory answer to the foregoing question will be found in Jesus. It was his message that initiated the Christian movement. And yet one does not go to him merely because he was the founder of this religion. Many religious movements soon outgrow the ideals of their originators. One goes to him because he had a message of abiding worth. What he taught is as fresh and vital today as it was when he gathered his disciples about him on the shores of Galilee. His followers from that day to the present have never gone beyond his teaching. Indeed, they have scarcely reached his ideals in any area of life. His message, then, has ever been and is today the message for his followers. It is the message of the Christian religion. There can be no other.

All that Jesus taught was embodied in his own life. He was the personal expression of his message, which was limited to no saying or body of sayings. Its totality is comprehended only as one includes his revelation, his moral power, and the total impact he made upon humanity. In the words of the Jerusalem Conference Report: "Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through him may become. In him we come face to face with the ultimate reality of the universe; he makes known to us God as our Father, perfect and infinite in love and in righteousness; for in him we find God incarnate, the final, yet ever-unfolding, revelation of the God in whom we live and move and have our being."[1]

Obviously, then, if one is to know the message of the Christian religion, one must know Christ. What Jesus taught must be given careful consideration. His words with their original connotations must be studied. His way of living must be understood. The meaning of his experiences must be fathomed. His attitudes toward the questions of his day, his aspirations for humanity, his insight into the deeper meanings of life—all must be comprehended in so far as man can know them, if one would understand the Christian message.

---

[1] The Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message*, I, p. 402. Used by permission.

What, then, did Jesus teach? What had he in mind when he spoke "as one having authority"? What was the significance of the life he lived? The brief compass of this chapter will permit only the merest outline of the meaning of his life and of the content of his teaching.

Jesus' Teaching About God

Outstanding in the life of Jesus was his experience of God. To him God was as real as the pulsing humanity that pressed his pathway. He walked ever conscious of the presence of the Father. No energy was wasted in futile search for the Great Mystery. No altar was erected to the Unknown God. No logic was exercised to prove his existence. Freely Jesus sought the living God and found in him a satisfying reality.

Ethical righteousness.—In essence, Jesus taught that God was primarily concerned with the relationships men had with one another. Above all, God desired right living on the part of men. This was not the emphasis made by the teachers of his own race. The Pharisee held that holy living or salvation was to be found in the meticulous observance of the Law. And the Law called for endless feasts and fasts and many offerings and bloody sacrifices. Added to the Law was a body of ever-growing oral tradition, which the Pharisee said must be kept as strictly as the Law. While Jesus declared the Law was not to be destroyed—it was rather to be fulfilled[2]—he did not hesitate to give it a new interpretation[3] and he even dared to go beyond it.[4] The oral tradition he did not pretend to follow, nor did he require his disciples to keep it.[5] He even condemned the traditions of the elders for bowing men down and putting upon their backs burdens ''grievous to be borne.''[6] He went so far as to say the traditions set the Law at naught.[7] God was more concerned, Jesus taught, with right living than with the strict observance of form and ceremony.

Israel's heritage was not to be found only in the Law but also in the teachings of the great prophets. Many of these ancient leaders had caught a vision of a God who preferred righteous living to dripping sacrifices. They had exalted ethical living and had condemned the empty forms of Israel's religious life. ''. . . . I despise your feasts and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies,'' cried Amos. ''Yea, though you offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them. . . . . But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.''[8] These prophets had seen a God who delighted in justice. And some of them had even caught the vision of a God of love.[9] The Pharisee had cherished the Law at the expense of the teachings of the prophets. Jesus was more at home with the prophets than he was with the keepers of the Law. He had the free spirit of the ancient seers. With their emphasis upon justice and right living,

[2] Matthew 5:17. [3] Luke 10:25-37. [4] Matthew 19:8. [5] Mark 7:1-11. [6] Matthew 23:4. [7] Matthew 15:6. [8] Amos 5:21-24. [9] Hosea 6:4-6; 14:1-3.

he was in hearty accord. He laid great stress upon their ideals of social justice. He had their disregard of ceremonialism. He believed with them that the doing of righteousness and justice and mercy would alone win the favor of God and make for holy living.

A God of love.—Jesus taught that God is essentially and unmistakably a God of love. He chose the figure of a loving father as the best means of describing him. Men, he indicated, are part of a great family and God is their loving Father. So intimate is the concern of God for his children, Jesus said, that "the very hairs of their heads are numbered." He pointed to the innumerable and inconsequential sparrows that were flitting about. These, he said, cannot fall against the Father's will.[10] And, if the Father takes note of them, how great must his concern for men be. Jesus bade his disciples to approach God in prayer without fear. They could even go so far as to insist upon their petitions being heard, and they were assured that the Father who knew how to give good gifts would not turn a deaf ear to their supplications.[11] And once he told his disciples: "When you pray, say, Our Father." And in these two words is contained the whole idea of the family of God. To Jesus, God was an approachable and loving Father.

God's love constant.—And this love of God for men, Jesus emphasized, was not fitful. It was constant and dependable. Man can do nothing that puts him beyond the love of God. An erring son may wander far, deliberately turn his back upon the Father and even debauch himself in wicked living,

[10] Matthew 10:29-31. [11] Luke 11:13.

but still the love of God goes out to him. He may leave the family circle, but however far he goes, let him turn his face Godward and a loving Father runs to meet him. Such Jesus revealed God to be in the inimitable parable of the prodigal son.

God's love impartial.—The love of God for men, according to Jesus, is as impartial as it is constant. In this regard, Jesus did not accept the ideas of his countrymen. To the Jew, God showed favoritism. They were his chosen people. Their history, as they interpreted it, was a record of God's special dealings with them. They had been set apart as a people and through them God would bless the world.[12] It was true the kingdom of David had passed and they were a people without land and political power, yet they fondly dreamed of future Jewish dominion over the entire earth. God would subjugate the other peoples and his chosen Israel would be redeemed and would stand supreme among the nations.

Jesus, however, emphasized another view. His spirit was broad and sympathetic. He did not have the narrow and intolerant attitude of the Pharisee. In his ministry, he was as ready to help a Roman or a Syrophoenician as he was a Jew. He taught that the way of service, not material power, nor racial exclusiveness, was the road to greatness. God's chosen people would be those who served most.[13] The Father's love is for all. It is not his will "that one of these little ones should perish."[14] He "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."[15] Jesus'

[12] Genesis 12:13. [13] Matthew 25:31-46. [14] Matthew 18:14.
[15] Matthew 5:45.

followers are to make disciples of *all* the nations.[16] Racial, national, and class lines are not boundaries in the realm of God's love.

And how God rejoices when a sinful child returns. The routine of a household is interrupted that all may feast and rejoice. The finding of the lost sheep is the signal for calling in friends and neighbors to make merry. The lost coin, brought to light after diligent search, again brings friends and neighbors rejoicing. So, Jesus says, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."[17]

The deeds of Jesus.—But Jesus' teaching about God is not limited to his words. Even more regnant than the burning messages he spoke were his gracious deeds. What he declared God to be, that he lived.

The Father would have every erring child respond to his love. So "the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." He was found associating with publicans and sinners, the groups particularly hated by the pharisaic sect. These, he declared, had need of a physician. He would minister to them.

It seemed that Jesus gave the most attention to those who counted for the least. The children whom even the disciples would brush aside, he took into his arms and blessed. Women were then not rated highly in certain quarters, yet Jesus gave them every consideration. Publicans were despised, but Jesus called them to his discipleship. He dared to

[16] Matthew 28:19. [17] Luke 15:10.

minister to Samaritans whom the Jews called dogs. False distinctions, the antitheses of love, were not within the ministrations of Jesus.

Since God would not restrict the range of his love, Jesus, therefore, limited his ministry to no one class or group. Roman soldier and Samaritan leper; epileptic boy and little child; blind Bartimaeus, beggar, and rich Zacchaeus, publican; rough fishermen and eager zealots; shameful woman at the well and hospitable Mary and Martha; troubled multitudes and puzzled individuals—all alike received help and comfort from his hands. Love was to reach the last one of earth.

A stumblingblock.—This conception of God as love is a stumblingblock to many today. To some the idea of justice makes greater appeal. To others the inexorableness of nature and the presence of evil in the world seem inconsistent with the idea of love. Many cannot escape their connotations of love as a sickly sentiment. But can there be justice when love is violated? Is justice mere retribution? Is not the life of supreme good will the only way to attain justice? Should the inexorableness of nature and the presence of evil in the world be set opposite the love of God? Is not love an attitude of life rather than a sentiment or an effervescent emotion? And does love mean that one can sin against God without suffering the consequences of his own misdeeds? To answer these questions would take one far afield. But it may safely be said that the life of love as Jesus lived it will make for virile living and for the highest justice.

Jesus and prayer.—God would have men come to him in prayer. And Jesus here sets the example. Upon different occasions he is found in prayer. "In the morning, a great while before day, he rose up, and went out . . . . and there prayed."[18] And "he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God."[19] Prayers were uttered at critical points in his life.[20] In solitude[21] and before his disciples, in the stress and strain of life, he confidently and effectively made his approaches to God. There was, too, something about his praying that gripped. His prayers were not the vain repetition of words against which he warned his followers. The model prayer he gave in response to the request of his disciples was simple and direct.[22] For "fervent and effectual prayer," Jesus set the standard.

Jesus had no favorites.—Jesus taught that God had no favorites. Therefore, Jesus had none. He consorted with publicans and Samaritans and outcasts. He gathered little children into his arms and blessed them. He courteously treated the women he met. His healing ministry cut across all racial lines. Roman, Samaritan, Syro-Phoenician, Jew—each felt the touch of his hand. Outcasts, sinners, priests, rulers, sick, rich, and poor alike were objects of his concern.

It was this life with God that makes Jesus so compelling. He gave no definition of God. He gave no argument for his existence. But Jesus lived at one

[18] Mark 1:35. [19] Luke 6:12. [20] Luke 6:12; 9:28; 22:32; 23:34; 23:46; and others. [21] Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12, and others. [22] Luke 11:1.

with the Father and the marvelous life that resulted therefrom gives a uniqueness to that experience of his with God. And the significance of Jesus' life is found in its call to men to seek that same experience of the heavenly Father.

The implications of what Jesus had to say about God and of his experience of the Father are evident. If God's chief attribute is love, and he is best described as a loving Father, then his purposes for the world must be good. Man need not live in fear. He may confidently approach God and seek the strength he needs to attain his best. He may labor assured that every effort for good will make its contribution to the permanent attainments of the human race.

JESUS' TEACHING ABOUT MAN

Of equal importance to the teaching of Jesus concerning God and his experience of the Father were his relationships to men and his teachings about them.

Men of infinite worth.—Men, Jesus held, are of infinite worth. In one sweeping statement, he set men forever above everything in God's creation. ''For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?''[23] There is nothing that man should accept in exchange for his life.

Jesus emphasized, too, the infinite worth of the individual. In the stories of the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son, it is the one coin, the one sheep, the one son who is the object of solicitude. God's prime desire is to bring the lost ones back to the household, to the family hearth. The usual round of life is interrupted until this is accomplished. Their return is the occasion for joyous abandon. It is not the Father's will that one shall be lost from the family circle.

---

[23] Matthew 16:26.

Jesus believed in the possibilities and superior worth of men. This was indicated in various comparisons he made. Consider the lilies of the field, he said. They are the objects of God's care. He has clothed them in a beauty with which Solomon's glory is not to be compared. And yet how much more does God care for men.[24] Here is the grass which perishes in a day, here the birds of the heavens, the many sparrows. Yet these for whom God has done so much are not to be compared to men. "Are not ye of much more value than they?"[25] "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."[26]

The place of institutions and customs.—Jesus clearly indicated that institutions and customs, which men come to prize so highly, are of value only as they serve mankind. They are means, never ends. Even the Sabbath, which was especially sacred to the Jews in Jesus' day, was declared made for man and not man for it.[27] Its value was to be measured in terms of service to men. The elaborate ceremonialism of his people, the ceaseless washings of hands and bodies, of pots and cups and vessels, were brushed aside as setting at naught the commandments of God.[28] These attitudes do not mean that Jesus did not observe forms. He had reverence for the Law. He respected many of the oral traditions. He frequented the synagogue, at least while it was open to him. He diligently studied the Scriptures. But he was careful to make his forms mean not merely a service of the lips but one of the heart as well. All these observances were to be valued according to their enrichment of humanity.

---

[24] Matthew 6:30. [25] Matthew 6:26. [26] Matthew 10:31. [27] Mark 2:27. [28] Mark 7:1-16.

Man's capacity for growth.—Jesus taught, too, that men have infinite capacity for growth. They are capable of becoming no less than sons of God. This is implied in his idea of God as Father. Certain specific statements indicate what must be done to become a child of God. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God."[29] "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father."[30] And Jesus indicated that he who did the will of the Father became thereby a brother to the Son of God and therefore a child of God.[31] And the blessed life, described in the beatitudes, lifts one to a place in the family of God. They who so live are to see God. They are to be called sons of God. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus' respect for personality.—Jesus' attitude toward men as well as his statements concerning them revealed a fundamental respect for personality. In the homes he visited, he was a gracious guest. He noticed little children because he saw they had worth in themselves. Rough fishermen and despised publicans had possibilities as future leaders in the Kingdom. The sick and hurt were given a place in his loving concern. The unfortunate and outcast were sought that hope might be planted in their hearts. Always he seemed to search for the good in

[29] Matthew 5:9. [30] Matthew 5:44. [31] Matthew 12:50.

men and capitalized it when it was found. Only the stubborn legalism of the Pharisees brought condemnation from the lips of Jesus. And this condemnation came only because he believed the elaborate forms they insisted upon, stood in the way of the most abundant living. In all ways, Jesus put men first. To him, every one was a potential son of God.

Immortality.—The immortality of man Jesus took for granted.[32] It was another question he did not argue. He gave to human life such significance that, when man makes an honest effort to realize his possibilities, life seems worthy of perpetuation beyond the brief years of its earthly duration. Jesus' confidence begat in his followers a conviction as to man's immortality. And the assurance that Jesus gave his followers of life beyond this world has but further added to the dignity with which he clothed human existence.

The Kingdom of God

Jesus said a great deal about the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven. Judged by his numerous references, he gave it a fundamental place in his teaching. But at no time, as far as the gospel records reveal, did he attempt a definition. Perhaps definition would only have brought confusion and opened the way to futile contentions.

However, one desires to know what he meant when he spoke of the Kingdom. And since the idea of the Kingdom of God is wrought into the very fabric of his teaching, one must know in order to understand his message.

---

[32] Matthew 22:23-33 and others.

The Kingdom idea in Jesus' day.—Jesus spoke to his day in regard to the Kingdom. People "were in expectation."[33] This is not to be interpreted, however, as meaning everyone. But certainly there was a widespread interest. The Messiah was expected to appear at any time. Every reformer was scrutinized to see if he could be the Coming One. Every voice speaking of the Kingdom found an attentive audience. Jesus could not have ignored the messianic hopes of his people had he so desired.

To understand Jesus' teaching concerning the Kingdom, it is necessary to know the background against which he worked.

A subject nation.—The Jews were a subject nation. Their history was largely the story of a conquering and conquered people. Situated as they were at the junction of the world's trade arteries, they became the battleground of the nations. No country could long remain independent or grow to large proportions in their geographical position. Under David and Solomon they had attained national greatness and had known the glories of empire. But the empire soon divided and a series of calamities robbed them of their land and scattered them over the Mediterranean world. By the practice of racial exclusiveness, they preserved their identity. A remnant, but only a remnant, returned to Jerusalem, the holy city, and undertook to rebuild the sacred temple and restore Jewish life. Centuries of subjugation by one nation and another followed. The Maccabean revolutionary leaders, taking advantage of the threat of the rising power

[33] Luke 3:15.

of Rome, gave Israel a respite of political independence for a century. But the empire that had disturbed the Mediterranean balance finally incorporated the Jewish nation. The power of Rome held sway in Palestine when Jesus wrought his ministry.

The hope of Israel.—But disaster and misfortune never caused Israel to lose hope. Had not Jehovah given them the holy land? Was not the holy city the place where he should be worshiped? Had his presence not been manifested on the sacred temple area where the holy of holies had stood? Had not the prophets foretold that a remnant would be saved and would save Israel? By such reasoning they interpreted their misfortunes and sustained their hopes.

Jesus began his ministry in the heated atmosphere of Jewish nationalistic hopes. Revolution for centuries had been in the making and was constantly on the verge of outbreak. The yoke of Rome was more than irksome. The Jews were a proud people and their lack of national identity was a source of deep humiliation. Fervently they looked forward to the time when at least a part of the ancient glories would be restored.

The Zealots' expectation.—Opinion was divided as to the way the change was to be effected. The Zealots looked for a re-establishment of the Davidic kingdom. This meant the overthrow of the Roman empire by force, the subjugation of the heathen peoples, and the rule of the world by the Jewish race. Such a kingdom would be based decidedly upon material and national interests.

The Pharisees' hope.—The educated Pharisees and a majority of the Jews who followed them looked for the restoration of the kingdom by miraculous means. God was expected to intervene and destroy the heathen kingdoms and to set up the universal rule of his chosen people. Signs in the heavens and miraculous manifestations were to indicate the beginning of the new era. This group repudiated the idea of force, but was continually looking for "signs and wonders."[34]

The messianic hope.—These changes, however they were to be brought about, were to be made under the direction of a messianic leader. This leader God would reveal in some providential way. He would lead in setting up a universal Jewish state. Through him the Jews would find a place as a people and a nation in the life of the world.

Jesus did not choose to disregard the messianic expectancies of his people. He entered into their national hopes. His first public appearance was made in a center of messianic interest. John the Baptist was preaching in the wilderness of Judea. Crowds were flocking to his desert pulpit. "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"[35] was his message. And no doubt it was this preaching of the Kingdom message that attracted Jesus to the Baptist movement. There is reason to believe that he began his ministry in this center of messianic expectancy.[36]

What Jesus taught.—What Jesus taught concerning the coming of the Kingdom is not easy to understand. Scholars have long debated it and are still divided over the question. But in effect Jesus taught that the Kingdom would come and God would be concerned with the processes of its coming. Man, however, would share in the labor of bringing it in. Its coming was not to be as his contemporaries expected. It would not be ushered in by violence and bloodshed. Nor would the expected signs and wonders appear.[37] The Kingdom would grow. Its coming would be like the working of leaven.[38]

---

[34] Matthew 12:38-40. [35] Matthew 3:2. [36] Mark 1:14.

Jesus seemed to look forward to an ideal order of society wherein the will of God would be done. At the same time he never lost sight of the actual, present condition of men. And what men did now had a bearing upon their future relationship to the Kingdom. Whatever God might do to usher in the Kingdom would not be detached from what men would do. God's actions were not arbitrary. The Kingdom would come not through the establishment of a Jewish empire and the punishment of Israel's enemies, but rather through the doing of the will of a loving Father. It was upon this fact that Jesus placed greatest emphasis.

The question, however, of a definition of the Kingdom persists. The best answer no doubt is to be found in terms of Jesus' idea of God. God to him was not an arbitrary king, but a loving Father. And the Kingdom he would set up would be like a great family. Men would live as brothers. And God's just will would be done.

The law of the Kingdom.—Jesus declared the fundamental law of the Kingdom to be love. Love was

[37] Luke 17:20. [38] Matthew 13:33.

the force that would finally make the Kingdom triumphant. This law might be summed up in the two great commandments: ''Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,'' and ''Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.''[39] Love, however, in the new Kingdom was not to be narrowly construed as the Pharisees had interpreted it under the Law. A man was to live as a brother to all men. Harmonious relationships with one's fellow-men must be established before an approach to God was acceptable.[40] Love was to go beyond one's friends, even to one's enemies.[41] The loving and forgiving life was to be the test of perfect living.

All that Jesus said about love, he re-enforced with his living. ''Being moved with compassion,'' he healed the sick and the blind and the lame. He restored the leper. He seemed unable to restrain his healing hands. His love cut across lines of race and class. His love was strong enough to make him willing even ''to lay down his life for his friends.''[42] And when the dim outlines of the cross became discernible to him, he was not deterred in his loving purpose to do the Father's will completely.

Love expressed in service.—Love, the law of the Kingdom, was to find expression in human service. Love was to be no soft emotion, no shallow talking, no mere sentimentality. Love was to be wrought out in hard service. Each member of the Kingdom was to do unto others only as he would be done by.[43] Greatness in the Kingdom was to be determined not by chief seats nor by positions at feast tables, but by the service rendered one's fellow-men.[44] And the final test of living, as Jesus portrayed it in the famous judgment scene, is to be made according to the service done—visiting the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry.

---

[39] Matthew 22:37-39. [40] Matthew 5:23, 24. [41] Matthew 5:43-48. [42] John 15:13. [43] Luke 6:31.

Here, again, Jesus set the example. "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth," he declared.[45] "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."[46] And on every journey he made, it may be said of him that "he went about doing good." The needy of the earth met him everywhere and never once did he refuse the service he could so graciously give.

Sin.—Now failure to live by love, which alone would make one a member of the Kingdom, was sin according to Jesus. This failure might be due to neglect or to overt acts. In either case, the consequences were the same. Hard though this fact might be, Jesus did not attempt to soften it or to "psychologize" it away. The greatest calamity that could befall a man was to fail to attain membership in the Kingdom, and with that truth Jesus did not compromise. Sin was the negation of the law of love. Its consequence was failure to achieve membership in the Kingdom.

A daring idea.—The idea of a Kingdom founded upon the law of love was a daring one. The past experiences of men and the conditions of the times were such that the world would regard it as utter foolishness. Kingdoms were built by crushing armies and devastating lands and carrying away cap-

[44] Mark 10:35-45. [45] Luke 22:27. [46] Matthew 20:28.

tives. Kings were crowned on red battlefields. It took courage to look into the leering face of a Roman soldier, to view the indifference of the world to its own misery, to see the hatred of one race for another, and to say that all men are brothers and that a Kingdom based on love would be established. But Jesus had insight into life sufficient to see that love alone would prove a satisfactory basis for human relationships, that only love could make men worthy to be called sons of God.

Membership in the Kingdom.—Membership in the Kingdom, Jesus taught, was open to all classes. Many were to come from the east and the west and sit down in the Kingdom with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.[47] The mercies of Jesus were extended as freely to Samaritan, Syrophoenician and Roman as to his own people. Membership was not a matter of race or class. It was to be attained by doing the will of God. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."[48]

This is the message of the Christian religion. It is the message of Jesus God, a loving Father; men, highest in the order of creation, brothers, possible sons of God; love, the law of the Kingdom; service, the measure of greatness. How glorious the race will live when it catches the vision of the Man of Galilee! How rich will man's heritage be when all men everywhere know a loving Father, when they live as brothers, when the Kingdom principle of love expressing itself in service, dominates their activities! Such a destiny is worth working millenniums to achieve.

---

[47] Matthew 8:11. [48] Matthew 7:21.

And such is the message the Christian religion has for the world.

FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. The origin of the messianic hope of Israel.
2. The uniqueness of Jesus.
3. The development of the idea of God as love.
4. What is sin?
5. What does the sacredness of personality imply as to industry, business, war, family life, recreation?
6. Can you define the Kingdom of God?
7. Are we to look for the Kingdom today?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mathews, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chaps. i, ii, iii, iv, Macmillan.
Smith, G. B.: Principles of Christian Living, chap. iii, The University of Chicago Press.
Cavert, S. M.: The Adventure of the Church, chap. ii, Missionary Education Movement.
Kent, C. F., and Jenks, J. W.: Jesus' Principles of Living, chaps. iii, x, Scribners.
McAfee, Cleland Boyd: The Christian Message and Program, studies iii, iv, The Westminster Press.
Bailey, John W.: Christianity a Way of Life and Belief, chaps. iii, v, The Judson Press.
Gilkey, Charles: Jesus and Our Generation, chap. iii, The University of Chicago Press.
Scott, Ernest Findlay: The Gospel and Its Tributaries, chap. iii, Scribners.

CHAPTER II

THE PROGRAM

SCRIPTURES

MARK 3:14.—And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.

MATTHEW 28:19, 20.—Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is a program?
2. Did Jesus have a clearly defined program? Indicate the evidence for your answer.
3. Did Jesus emphasize or neglect organization? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What should be the program of Christianity today?
5. What place should organization have in the Christian movement?
6. Are goals essential to an effective program? Why?

The message of the Christian religion, as noted in the previous chapter, is the message of Jesus Christ. Its essential features are expressed in his concept of God as a loving Father, in his estimate of the worth of men, and in his declaration that the life of love, or of supreme good will, is the only way to prepare for the coming Kingdom of God. With this message in mind, the question that naturally follows is: What is the program by which this message is to be made known?

WHAT IS A PROGRAM?

Since confusion as to the meaning and function of program quite generally prevails, it will be well at the outset to have clearly in mind what program means. A program, as some look upon it, is something to be condemned. It is regarded as being too rigid, too restrictive of action. Others consider it akin to magic. Outline one and results are expected forthwith. Frequently, persons lose themselves in the details of program building and make the formulation of a program an end in itself. Their delight is in the elaboration of plans. They can outline admirable programs but fail miserably in their administration. The consequent lack of fruitage brings disrepute upon the whole idea of program building. Some happily can outline a simple plan of action, set up the necessary goals, and work consistently according to the procedure outlined. These different attitudes toward program and program building result in a confusion that should be eliminated. A definition of program and a statement of its function will help to make clear its meaning and to avoid the confusion that now exists.

A definition.—A program is a plan of action involving goals. If one outlines the way he will work to accomplish a task, he makes a program. He creates nothing of magic, nothing to be condemned. There is no virtue in it unless it becomes a guide to action. It is not an end in itself. A program is nothing more nor less than a plan by which a task is to be done.

In the definition of program it is well to include the idea of goals or objectives. These are needed to give definiteness to a program. They will keep one from losing himself in his own plans to "do things." They will cause one to hold his attention upon the real ends to be sought and will stimulate consistent, definite action toward their realization.

The function of a program.—The function of a program is to make possible orderly, and therefore effective, action. By previously outlining one's task, every effort may be made to count. With the steps of the procedure outlined, confusion on the part of workers is avoided. No time need be lost in wondering what next to do. Parts of the task may be divided among various helpers. With such assignment of parts, all duplication of effort and working at cross purposes may be avoided. The very outline of the task by its definiteness becomes a challenge. Progress may be measured as successive items of the program are accomplished. Thus a program serves to produce systematic and fruitful procedure in the realization of definite ends.

The Personal Program of Jesus

Did Jesus have a program? Or was he an aimless wanderer? There are those who, having in mind the technical, highly organized programs of today, will deny that he had any program whatsoever. Many will say that Jesus was too creative to work by some strict, preconceived plan of action, and that he went out to do the task he had in mind unhindered by any previously arranged procedure, uncommitted to any one plan.

But a careful reading of the gospels will reveal a sense of program on the part of Jesus. His plan of action was definite, though simple. First, he would gather about him a few men whose hopes for Israel were high. Then he would help these men by processes of education to see that of which he was convinced. The Kingdom of God would not come by violent revolution or by cosmic catastrophe. It would come only when men learned to do the will of God. And his disciples, coming to see what he so clearly sensed, were to go everywhere proclaiming the ''good news.'' ''And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.''[1] Jesus' personal program, though simple, was definite.

The plan of Jesus' ministry.—But notwithstanding the simplicity of Jesus' method of work, his ministry seems to have been definitely planned. He believed in system. He had a sense of strategy. He was no visionary, no impractical leader. His mingling with people made him appreciate a hard-headed, practical approach to all questions. He conducted his ministry in no haphazard way.

The gospel records indicate that he began his work in Judea, and there is reason to believe that he was at first attached to the movement of John the Baptist.[2] But upon the imprisonment of John, Jesus transferred his activities to Galilee. Why he did so is not definitely known. Perhaps the results of his work in Judea were not satisfactory. Or it may have been the methods of the Baptist were not to his

[1] Mark 3:14. [2] Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14.

liking, for Jesus worked in a radically different manner. The opposition around Jerusalem may have been too severe, and it is quite certain that had Jesus remained in Judea his ministry would have been shorter even than it was. Jesus did not work without a sense of planning.

It seems to have been wise strategy on the part of Jesus when he made Capernaum and its environs the center of his activities.[3] It was some distance from the pharisaic center at Jerusalem and opposition from them would not be so soon forthcoming. Capernaum was strategically situated. It was a great commercial city and had a dense Jewish population. It was on the main arteries of trade that extended from Egypt, Babylonia, Rome, and other centers of the world. Highways ran from it to all parts of Palestine and Syria. Any message given there would spread rapidly and widely.

Capernaum with its surroundings was a situation needing the very teaching Jesus had to offer. All classes of people were found there. The derelicts of humanity made it a center. Rich and poor made their homes within its gates. Business men directed the commercial enterprises of the city's life and working people labored to keep its industries going. Those in good standing in society basked in their own self-content while the outcasts begged for a mere existence. The diseased and afflicted lined every roadside. The races mingled at every corner. Capernaum needed the very message Jesus had to give.

---

[3] See Kent's, *The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, chapter xvii.

And, if any one would accept it, surely those whose need was greatest would do so.

Jesus' choice of disciples.—Jesus' choice of his disciples furnishes another illustration of the careful planning that was back of his ministry. Their selection was not made on any indiscriminate basis. They were not only an able group, but they were representative for the most part of the different classes in that section. Peter and Andrew were hard-working fishermen. James and John were well-to-do workmen. Matthew, the publican, was a rich tax collector. Simon was a Zealot and eager for the restoration of the Jewish nation. Judas Iscariot was a man of business acumen and keen ambition. Varied though these men were in temperament and in experience, all found a place in Jesus' ''cabinet.'' They were the nucleus around which he built. And their very differences furnished a more varied leadership and made a wider appeal.

Jesus' strategy.—Jesus seems deliberately to have chosen the strategy by which he worked. Though crowds continually sought him, he frequently avoided them. He centered his efforts largely upon the training of a few disciples. In this way he made secure the foundations he was building. Sending them forth two by two into near-by villages[4] was not only part of their training but it was a definite attempt to widen his personal influence. Jesus was quick to see that only through his disciples could a permanent foundation be made and the multitudes be ultimately reached.

[4] Mark 6:7.

And finally when Jesus ''stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,''[5] his determination to go was probably the result of sober reflection. This was no foolhardy adventure. After removing himself from the dangerous Jerusalem center, he was not one to needlessly risk his life by returning to it. Perhaps, as some believe, it was part of a plan to make a final, dramatic appeal to the nation to accept his message.

Jesus and organization.—It is evident that Jesus did not put primary dependence upon organization. He did not follow the present-day practice of setting up national, state and county organizations to ''put over'' his proposition. The claim that Jesus' school of disciples had more than the simplest organization can scarcely be sustained. Organization probably was not the first need. The promotion of any vital cause in its beginning does not depend upon organization. Jesus must have sensed this. He seemed to have believed that if men could but catch the spirit and know the joys of a life of love, their genius aided by the Holy Spirit would create the organization needed to usher in the Kingdom of God. It was better strategy for him to spend his time training a few trustworthy leaders than to elaborate organization which eventually was sure to prove unwieldy.

DID JESUS HAVE A PROGRAM FOR HIS FOLLOWERS?

The disciples of Jesus answered this question in the affirmative. They conceived their task as that of witnessing. ''. . . and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.''[6] Jesus had told them to go ''into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.''[7] And in doing the will of their Master, ''they went forth, and preached,''[8] each bearing his own testimony.

---

[5] Luke 9:51.

A simple program.—This program of proclaiming the ''good news'' was the plan of action Jesus had for his followers. It was indeed simple. It was not loaded with technicalities. It meant that his disciples would first be filled with his spirit. They would try in all cases to do the will of God. They would live as brothers to all men. Their actions would be controlled by love. They would know the joy of such living. Then they would be dynamic witnesses of this new life. They would go everywhere telling men of Jesus, how he revealed the Father, how he lived the godlike life on earth. They would testify to the satisfaction of such living. And above all, they would try to persuade men to prepare for the Kingdom by right living. This quiet, pervasive, persistent, leavening process was the way by which his purpose was to be realized.[9] Such was the simple program of Jesus for his followers.

The program of Jesus bound men by no set of rules which they must slavishly follow. Ample room was left for creativity. Men were free to go in his spirit, in love, to proclaim the new way of life. They could devise their own means for making Christ known. They could use any method circumstances would dictate to be wise. In fact, the dynamic nature of the spirit of Christ would compel them to go far beyond their first conceptions of the Kingdom and their initial efforts to prepare for its coming.

---

[6] Acts 1:8. [7] Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19, 20. [8] Mark 16:20.
[9] Matthew 13:33.

Attitude toward organized religion.—Jesus' failure to emphasize organization does not mean that he was opposed to it, or to organized religion. There is no reason to believe, had emphasis upon organization been needed, that Jesus would not have stressed it. He had too profound an insight into human nature and human needs to belittle organization. His approach to the problems of life was too practical to leave his own movement to the unguided impulses of men and women. He surely knew that a religious movement which did not organize itself could not hope to succeed.

However, it is doubtful if Jesus' references to the church implied the highly institutionalized organization it has become. The church is only twice mentioned by Jesus, so far as the gospels reveal.[10] And the word *ecclesia,* translated church, probably meant group or congregation or community.[11] It did not connote the institution the church now is.

Yet Jesus took no issue with organized religion as such. His condemnation of the Jewish religious leaders was not because they were a part of an institutionalized religious movement. It was because they made an end of ceremonialism, of organization, of form. They had lost sight of the great ends of religion. Though Jesus quietly ignored many of the observances these leaders deemed essential and, when necessary, openly opposed them,[12] he did not, however, turn his back upon organized religion. He was found in the synagogue service.[13] He frequently used the synagogues as centers for his activities.[14] The law and the prophets were to be given richer meaning, not to be destroyed.[15] Jesus was advocating no break with organized religion.

---

[10] Matthew 16:18; 18:17. [11] See Matthews, *Jesus on Social Institutions,* pp. 121-2, and Scott, *The Gospel and Its Tributaries,* p. 80. [12] Mark 7:1-16.

It is significant to note, too, that under the personal direction of his followers, the movement he initiated soon took organized form. They who had companioned with him did not interpret any attitude or utterance of his as opposed to organization. Organized Christianity was inevitable. The important truth to keep in mind is that the organization must ever be used as a means. It must help men find God. It must make for Godlike living. It must help spread the "good news" to the ends of the earth.

The evaluation of organization that Jesus would make may be accurately inferred. Personality with him always came first. Human institutions were of worth only as they served mankind. Organization, therefore, becomes a means to an end and never an end in itself. It should always be so used. Whenever organization ceases to enrich men and women, whenever it becomes a thing in and for itself, whenever men use it for the enhancement of those who comprise it and not for the principles for which it is created, then organization is subversive of its true purposes and the spirit and teaching of Jesus condemn it.

The freedom of Jesus' followers.—The slight emphasis Jesus made upon program and organization was undoubtedly more than a matter of policy. It was not his purpose to bind his followers to a narrowly defined course of action. They were not to become mere automatons. They were to be free, creative spirits. They could do anything in keeping with his spirit. They were to revel in the life of love, seeking ever for higher and finer expressions of it. They were to exercise every degree of intelligence that was theirs in devising ways to make ready for the Kingdom. Their imaginations were to be given rein in planning conquests of the kingdoms of this world. Their courage was to be tested in ventures for God. Their failures even would become disciplines making for future triumphs. Every power of man was to find unlimited scope for activity in preparing for the Kingdom of God. And in the planning of campaigns, in the exercise of strategy, and in the setting up of organizations, men would be helped to become effective citizens of the Kingdom. The very process of planning the details of the program and of creating the organization needed to administer it would help make one fit to be called a child of God.

---

[13] Luke 4:16. [14] Luke 4:33, 44; 6:6; and others. [15] Matthew 5:17.

This freedom, however, does not imply an absence of all restrictions. Rigid limitations to the methods men may use are set by the principle of love. Nothing dare be done in a way that violates it. Nor may the life of love be proclaimed as something negative. Christian living must be advocated for the abundant process that it is. It should not be restricted to mere personal piety. No method should be used that leaves untouched great areas of social relationships. The followers of Jesus must see all of life, even as he saw it, when they seek to carry out the program of their Master. His professed followers are sometimes contentious, sometimes prejudiced and sometimes narrow in vision. Sometimes they would restrict the gospel to the homeland, or to the community, or to the local congregation. But men are forced by the very nature of the program of Jesus to a larger outlook, to a wider range of service. The universals in his program must never be ignored. Men must build the Kingdom in his spirit and in keeping with his far-reaching purposes.

However, these restrictions are more seeming than real. They rather set a limit below which the disciples of Jesus dare not go. They prevent the proclamation of a half-gospel. And by so doing they do not restrict the followers of Jesus so much as they compel a large exercise of powers. Men must work in the larger field. The program of Jesus must be operated on a world-wide scale. Men thereby will have ample freedom. They will not be dwarfed. Their genius will find full range. And every ability of man will reach its maximum as that ability is used in the glorious task of carrying out the program of Jesus.

Appeal to individuals.—Jesus' manner of approach to the questions of his day may well be the method for his followers as they seek to establish his cause. His appeal, for the most part, was made to individuals rather than to classes or to nations. His social ideals did not blind him to the fact that individuals, filled with his spirit, could alone build the Kingdom. Therefore, he endeavored to implant his ideals in the lives of men and women who, in turn, would transmit these ideals to others. Into the streets, the synagogues, the market places and wherever men were, Jesus went. He met them face to face and made his appeal directly to them. And they, when they caught the vision of the Kingdom of God, saw how it would be realized and, responding to his appeal, were thereby made responsible for spreading the "good news." The task of carrying out the program of Jesus was thus not vaguely delegated to "society" or some corporate body. Responsibility for it was definitely placed upon the individual. "And ye shall be my witnesses" was clearly the method to be used.

While Jesus thus made his appeal to individuals, he never lost sight of men's social obligations. The greatest in the Kingdom was the one who served most. An individual could not exist apart from his relationships to others. He must love his neighbors as himself. He was always part of a social situation and could never be separated from his social ties. This method of approach—a direct appeal to the individual with the individual's social relationships ever in mind—was the method of the Master and is the method that has been justified by centuries of experience. It is the method Jesus' followers should use today as they work to carry out his program.

Goals.—Did the program of Jesus for his followers involve goals? The gospels indicate that Jesus had these in mind. He was no vague reformer, sending his disciples out to win an indefinite following. His followers were to preach the gospel "to the *whole* creation";[16] they were to "make disciples of *all* the nations.''[17] It was a world-wide enterprise in which they were to enlist. The will of God was to be made known to all mankind. The last one of earth was to be reached. Every phase of society was to be touched. All the relationships of men were to be redeemed.

---

[16] Mark 16:15.

And this enterprise was assured of success. The writer of the Fourth Gospel reports Jesus as saying, ''And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.''[18] The Kingdom, coming through a process of growth, would fully mature—''first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.''[19] The mustard seed would grow until it became a tree. The leavening process would continue until the whole lump was leavened.

A word of caution may be needed at this point. The very simplicity of the program may be misleading. The vast sweep of Jesus' purpose may be missed. The plain implications of his teaching indicate that all the relationships of life are to be touched. God is love and he would have all men live in love. Men are of supreme worth; they have more value than all else in the world. National, race and class distinctions are not valid in the eyes of God. These fundamental facts must have acceptance. The life of love must be lived in the family, in the realm of business, in national life. Love must prevail in the face-to-face and in the remote relationships of men. These are the goals Jesus had in mind and are implicit in any program of his for his followers.

Thus it is evident that the program of Jesus for his followers lacks that abundance of detail so characteristic of programs today. The goals are in terms of ultimate achievement. There is no statement of what is to be accomplished by the end of the first year, the first decade, or even the first century. No campaigns are schemed up. No strategy is indicated. Apparently, his followers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit[20] are to devise their own ways and means of realizing his purpose to bring in the Kingdom that will mean the redemption of mankind.

---

[17] Matthew 28:19. [18] John 12:32. [19] Mark 4:28.

But because there is this simplicity as to detail, the idea that Jesus would oppose a definitely outlined procedure is an unwarranted inference. For him no doubt the best strategy was to put major emphasis upon a clear presentation of his cause. It was not the time to emphasize organization and program. There must be teaching. Life must be interpreted. Men must first come to know God as a loving Father. They must come to appreciate the supreme value of personality. The current misconceptions of the coming Kingdom must be corrected. The worth of a life of love eventuating in service must be made known. And the life of love must be given a perfect exemplification. All this was necessary to make a few men passionate evangels of the Kingdom, to fill them with that unconquerable spirit which was so sorely needed to meet the resistance of the world. This method of initiating the Christian movement was ultimately more successful than if Jesus had spent his time developing detailed plans for carrying on his work and setting up elaborate organizational devices.

[20] John 14:16, 26.

SHALL FOLLOWERS OF JESUS TODAY OUTLINE A PROGRAM?

If the foregoing presentation represents Jesus' attitude and method, then his followers may well concern themselves with program building. The system and planning which characterized his ministry should be evident in the work of his present-day disciples. His statesmanship should be emulated. The far look ahead which was ever his should give direction and reach to the Christian movement today.

Statesmanship needed.—The urgent need of the present-day world demands the most careful planning and the wisest statesmanship that Christianity can supply. Many countries have as yet scarcely heard the name of Christ. Vast areas of human relationships have not yet come under the control of the ideals of Jesus. Rapid changes in social conditions tax the ability of the Master's followers to keep the Christian ideal before every new situation. War and industrial strife remain a blotch on the civilization of this day. Only the wisest planning will make possible the Christianizing of the modern world.

Organization demanded.—This is an era of organization and of vast program building. Industries are almost daily being organized on a nation- and even world-wide scope. Evil likewise is organized and in some places on an astoundingly vast scale. Sin is not always limited to the wilful acts or the negligence of individuals. Men organize to sin and they plan with marvelous craftiness to make their wickedness prevail over extensive areas. And Christianity as an indefinite, undirected movement of pious individuals can never cope with organized iniquity. It is only as the followers of Jesus unite their resources and make their efforts count through judicious planning and effective organization, that Christianity can hope to succeed in its eternal conflict with sin.

But program and organization as used by the followers of Jesus must ever be viewed according to his standard of evaluation. These programs and organizations are not substitutes for the "spirit which giveth life." They are means, never ends. Jesus put his trust in men rather than in institutions. And followers of him must never lose themselves in form and plans. Programs if wrongly used will bind and cramp; if rightly used will guide and challenge and turn the Christian movement into a dynamic enterprise for building the Kingdom of God.

For Further Investigation

1. The relation of Jesus to John the Baptist.
2. The strategy of Jesus.
3. Modern examples of organized sin.
4. How keep institutions and programs from becoming ends?
5. Should "cabinets" be made up of those who are in agreement with the leader or who represent different points of view?
6. Can religion exist without organization?

Bibliography

Kent, C. F., and Jenks, J. W.: Jesus' Principles of Living, chaps. ii, x, Scribners.

Kent, C. F.: The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus, chaps. xvii, xviii, Scribners.

Shackford, John W.: The Program of the Christian Religion, chap. xi, xii, The Methodist Book Concern.

Vieth, Paul H.: Objectives in Religious Education, chap. ii, Harper and Brothers.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM OF THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

Scriptures

Acts 1:8.—And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 2:42.—And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 8:4.—They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

Questions to Consider

1. What was the program of the early disciples?
2. What principles guided the first Christians in the matter of organization?
3. What are the enduring elements of the Christian religion?
4. How did the Christian movement meet the crises of its history?
5. Does the program of the Christian movement change from age to age? Give reasons.
6. How account for the ancient creeds and the New Testament canon?

The Effect of Jesus' Death Upon His Followers

The sudden ending of the ministry of Jesus threw the disciples into confusion. In spite of the forewarning of the Master,[1] their minds seemed unprepared for the awful events of those last days. The submission of Jesus without resistance to the mob in Gethsemane was hard to understand and seemed to nullify their expectations of an early coming of the Kingdom. The desertion of Judas Iscariot, one of their own number, was a severe blow to the morale of the group. The trial condemning Jesus to death on the testimony of perjured witnesses[2] all but blotted out their hopes. The cruel death of the Master on the cross seemed a tragic ending of his promising cause. His disciples, confused and dismayed, scarcely knew what next to do. The fishermen returned to their nets[3] and all seemed about to go back to the work interrupted by the call of Jesus.

---

[1] Matthew 16:21.

That the immediate followers of Jesus were confused and felt a sense of defeat, is the testimony of the four gospel records. ''But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel,''[4] expressed the disappointment of the two on the way to Emmaus. And this sense of defeat was so great that the disciples could scarcely believe that Jesus was alive. His resurrection ''appearances'' were beyond their anticipations. The disciples disbelieved the report of his appearance to Mary Magdalene,[5] regarding it as ''idle talk.'' They would not believe that he had appeared to ''two of them, as they walked on their way into the country.''[6] Some doubted even when the Master appeared before them,[7] and Thomas to satisfy his mind had to have the most material proof.[8] And Jesus is represented as upbraiding the disciples because they would not believe those who had seen him.[9] To the disciples, the death of Jesus had meant the defeat of his cause.

---

[2] Mark 14:55-59. [3] Matthew 28:16; John 21:1. [4] Luke 24:21. [5] Mark 16:11. [6] Mark 16:12, 13. [7] Matthew 28:17. [8] John 20:24-29. [9] Mark 16:14.

A new hope.—But finally, the disciples became convinced that Jesus was not dead and his cause defeated. He was alive and with the Father. And the cause to which they had committed their lives must go on. They were not beaten. Even as their Master had triumphed over death, so would his cause rise above its seeming defeat. Not only were they convinced that Jesus was alive, but they believed that he would speedily return to them.[10] This belief probably accounts for their return to Jerusalem, which was for them a danger point, and for their going to the temple "continually" for prayer.[11] It was in the sacred shrine that God was expected to manifest himself. They lived from day to day in expectancy of the reappearance of their Master.[12]

But the disciples did not idly await the return of Jesus. They went energetically to work to enlarge their Master's following. They tried to make the same emphasis upon ethical uprightness that he had made. They called men to repentance. They were not mere visionaries; they were earnest preachers of righteousness.

A succession of events soon added many to the little group of Jesus' followers. The remarkable happenings on the day of Pentecost added three thousand.[13] And though the activities of the disciples brought opposition, nevertheless "many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."[14] The extraordinary works of the apostles resulted in the ingathering of

---

[10] Acts 1:11. [11] Luke 24:52, 53. [12] In the Thessalonian letters, Paul expresses the belief of the early Christians concerning the return of Jesus. [13] Acts 2:41. [14] Acts 4:4.

"multitudes both of men and women."[15] And as the number increased, "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."[16] And even after severe persecution had scattered many of the disciples and Herod had martyred James; the Scriptures confidently affirm that the "word of God grew and multiplied."[17]

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE AND PROGRAM BY THE EARLY DISCIPLES

Now, how did this growing group of disciples interpret the message of Jesus? What did they conceive the message and program of the Christian religion to be?

Fellowship.—Foremost in the life of this Christian group was its fellowship. "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."[18] "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul,"[19] their unity being so great and their fellowship so deep that many who had possessions sold them and turned the proceeds to the apostles for distribution among the group as there was need.[20]

The deep fellowship which characterized the first Christian group was due no doubt to several factors. Their belief in an early return of the Lord and their common hope in his coming bound them closely together. The persecution that soon met their zealous efforts turned them back upon their mutual resources and made them dependent upon one another. But their expectations of an early coming of the Lord and the persecution they soon experienced do not account entirely for their fellowship. Their being "of one heart and soul" rested upon mutual service in Christ's cause. In him the holiest ambitions of their hearts and the highest social impulses of their beings found expression. And, in this effort to make the will of the loving Christ known, they found fellowship supreme.

---

[15] Acts 5:14. [16] Acts 6:7. [17] Acts 12:24. [18] Acts 2:42. [19] Acts 4:32. [20] Acts 4:34, 35.

To bear witness.—The task of the follower of Jesus, as these early disciples conceived it, was to bear witness.[21] Their witnessing was brave and persistent. Peter and John, the leaders of the group, soon met opposition, but their witnessing continued. Imprisonment came yet they rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name."[22] Stephen, an honored leader of the group, was stoned to death because of his brave testimony. Persecution scattered the group "throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria," yet those who were thus driven from their homes "went about preaching the word."[23] The task of the Christian, as they conceived it, was to witness for Christ even though they defied authority in so doing and suffered the bitterest persecution.

Organization.—There is evidence of but little organization in the Christian community in Jerusalem. In fact there existed many factors that would work against an elaborate organization. The apostles by virtue of their experiences as the immediate companions of Jesus naturally became without formal appointment the leaders of the Christian movement. The belief of these Christians in an early return of the Lord, their conception of propagating the cause

[21] Acts 1:8; 2:32; 3:15. [22] Acts 5:41. [23] Acts 8:4.

by witnessing rather than by world conquest, and their remarkable unanimity served to reduce organizational needs to a minimum.

But when a situation arose requiring organization, the organization was created without hesitation. Such a situation was the neglect of the widows of the Grecian Jews in the daily distributions. Complaint was made and the Twelve took the matter in hand. Seven men were appointed to supervise the distributions, the Twelve reserving their labors for ''prayer and the ministry of the word.''[24] This seems to illustrate the principle of organization followed by the early Christians. When a need arose, it was met by the simplest possible organization.

First witness to the Jews.—But their witnessing at first was to their own race. They did not regard the Christian movement as apart from or outside of Judaism. Those outside the Jewish fold probably looked upon it as one of the many movements constantly springing up in Israel. The early Christians doubtless had no thought of becoming separated from the religion of their fathers. They observed Jewish rites. They made use of the temple. They recognized the Law. They made appeal to Jewish Scriptures. They even proclaimed Christianity as the consummation of Israel's history. Salvation was at least first to the Jews. Their preaching was confined to Jews, proselytes and ''God-fearers,'' such as Cornelius.[25] In describing the evangelistic campaign following the persecution that arose about Stephen, the writer of Acts is careful to mention that they preached to none

[24] Acts 6:1-6. [25] Acts 10:1, 2.

save the Jews.[26] From the beginning the Christians seemed to think of themselves as a movement within Judaism.

The Christian Movement Spreads

The spread of Christianity was inevitable. Such a movement could not remain a strict sect in Judaism. The joys it brought the Christian were satisfying and prompted him to a life of sharing. The emphasis upon brotherhood and the worth of every individual, regardless of race or class, constituted a dynamic that made expansion a surety. Christianity by its very nature broke all bonds of race and class.

The issues between Judaism and Christianity.—Certain issues were soon sharply drawn between Judaism and the Christian movement by the aggressiveness of the first Christians and the preaching of their leaders. Jesus was held by the early Christians to be the long-expected Messiah. This was an offense to many of the Jews. They had seen him go down in apparent defeat. They had seen him die on the cross as a common criminal. How could he be the Messiah the Christians said he was?

The belief of the early Christians that Jesus had been exalted to the throne of God and was seated at the right hand of the Father was another offense to the Jews.[27] For centuries they had held a belief in one God. They had defended this belief in the face of Greek and Roman polytheism. They had resisted all the efforts made by conquerors to compel an acceptance of the conqueror's chief deity. And now when the Christians exalted Christ to a position practically equal to God, the Jews saw in this an endangering of their monotheistic beliefs.

---

[26] Acts 11:19. [27] Acts 2:33; 5:30, 31; 7:55, 56.

Another element in the issue between Christianity and Judaism was the charge made by Christian preachers that the Jewish leaders and the Jewish race were responsible for the death of Jesus. Peter on more than one occasion[28] reminded them of their guilt. Stephen infuriated his accusers by making this same charge.[29] These accusations but accentuated the growing opposition to the Christian movement.

The issue was more sharply drawn when the Christians began to challenge the temple worship and the Law. Stephen voiced this when he declared that God dwelt not in houses made with hands and quoted a prophet to sustain his contention.[30] Such charges led inevitably to an open clash. Thus a break between Judaism and Christianity was from the beginning inevitable. Once the issues were drawn, opposition to the Christian movement became certain and relentless.

The program expands.—An energetic group with a liberal outlook soon became active in the Christian community and transformed Christianity from a movement within Judaism to one of world-wide significance. This group was known as Hellenists or Grecian Jews.

Palestine in the days of Jesus was composed of several classes. These were the Jews whose fathers had returned from the exile. They were the ones most concerned to restore the ancient glories of Israel.

---

[28] Acts 2:23, 36; 3:14, 15. [29] Acts 7:51-53. [30] Acts 7:47, 48.

The disciples and first Christians came from this group. The Hellenists or Grecian Jews, who had moved in from the Diaspora, comprised a second group. Many Jews living outside of Palestine upon attaining economic independence, or as a matter of patriotism, returned to the holy land. These were sufficiently numerous to be grouped in several synagogues in Jerusalem in the days of the early church.[31] A third group was made up of proselytes. The Jews carried on a vigorous campaign of proselyting[32] among the Gentiles, apparently with some degree of success.[33] A fourth group the "God-fearers," included those Gentiles attracted to Judaism[34] because of its belief in monotheism, its rigid moral code, and its rich historical background.

The Hellenists or Grecian Jews seem to have been attracted to Christianity from the beginning. When first mentioned, they comprised an important element in the Christian community.[35] The issue concerning the neglect of the widows of the Grecian Jews in the distributions of the common store brought the Hellenists into relief. The seven men appointed to prevent further neglect all had Greek names and apparently came from the Hellenist element. This points to the strength of that group from a very early day.

The Hellenist Christians seem to have been aggressive propagandists from the first. Stephen, one of the seven, carried on a campaign among the synagogues of the Grecian Jews in Jerusalem.[36] This brought him opposition and death. Then followed the first persecution of the church. This was directed against the Hellenistic group, the apostles being excepted.[37]

---

[31] Acts 6:9. [32] Matthew 23:15. [33] Acts 6:5. [34] Acts 10:1, 2. [35] Acts 6:1. [36] Acts 6:8.

The result of the persecution was to scatter the energetic evangelists, but their ''preaching the word'' did not cease. Philip proclaimed Christ in the city of Samaria[38] and in many other places.[39] Some of the evangelists no doubt went as far as Damascus as a group of Christians was found there at the time of Paul's conversion.[40] They traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch.[41] And Paul's letter to the Romans reveals in the capital city the existence of an energetic Christian group which probably had its origin at this time. The work of these evangelists was energetic and far-reaching. The program of the Christian religion as these leaders saw it was to bear witness of Christ wherever they went.

Christianity and the Gentiles.—This expansion of the Christian movement brought innumerable contacts with Gentiles. And from the beginning certain elements of the Christian religion had appealed to many in this group. The superior lives of the Christians, their brave stand in the face of persecution, and the winsomeness of Christ attracted many. And the numerous ''God-fearers'' in the synagogue were the more ready to accept Christianity when Jewish rites, and especially circumcision, were no longer required.

The response of the Gentiles brought to the fore a question that threatened to disrupt the Christian movement. Did a Christian have to keep the Law?

[37] Acts 8:1. [38] Acts 8:4, 5. [39] Acts 8:40. [40] Acts 9:19. [41] Acts 11:19.

Must a Gentile become a Jew in order to become a Christian? These were the questions raised.

In the Jerusalem Christian community, there were those who would have kept Christianity within Judaism. Every response by Gentiles called forth investigation. After Peter had preached to Cornelius, he was chided by those who "were of the circumcision."[42] The successes of the evangelists following Stephen's death resulted in the sending of Peter and John to Samaria to investigate.[43] And Barnabas was sent to examine the results of the efforts of the evangelists who went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch.[44] And after Paul had completed his first missionary journey, when many Gentiles had been won to Christ, a group from Judea came to Antioch and began to teach that Christians must become Jews.[45] No inconsiderable dissension followed and Paul and Barnabas were appointed to go to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. Peter defended Paul and Barnabas and declared that the gospel was meant for the Gentiles.[46] The multitudes were silenced. But James, "the Lord's brother" and leader in the Jerusalem church, spoke advocating a sort of compromise measure. He counseled that the Gentiles who turned to God be left untroubled but that a letter be written, advising the Gentile Christians to "abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood."[47] Two brethren, Judas and Silas, accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch and read the epistle to the Christians there. For the

[42] Acts 11:2. [43] Acts 8:14. [44] Acts 11:22. [45] Acts 15:1, 2. [46] Acts 15:7-11. [47] Acts 15:13-21.

time, the matter seemed to be ended with apparent satisfaction to all.

The Judaizing element in the Jerusalem Christian community gradually got control. This is indicated by the shift in leadership in the Jerusalem church. The apostles, Peter, James and John, were the acknowledged leaders in the beginning. James was put to death by Herod in 42 A.D.[48] John somehow drops out of the reported activities. And Peter is gradually supplanted by James, ''the Lord's brother.'' Paul indicates this in the Galatian letter. Upon his first visit to Jerusalem, he visited Peter and saw none of the other leaders except James.[49] Years later, however, he indicates the first place accorded James by the order in which he names the ''pillars'' of the Jerusalem church, ''James and Cephas and John.''[50] And upon his last visit to Jerusalem, Peter and John apparently are not part of the Jerusalem community, James only being mentioned.[51]

While Christianity was becoming a Gentile movement and shifting its center westward, the ''Judaizers'' remained implacable. The decision of the Jerusalem council apparently was not satisfactory. For many years this group continued to be a troublesome faction. The Jerusalem Christian community, however, ceased to be of any consequential influence in the Christian movement after the revolt of 66 A.D. and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Christianity from that time on, thanks to these early Christian Hellenists, the apostle Paul and his coworkers and countless others whose names will never be known, became a Gentile movement. The Jewish

[48] Acts 12:2. [49] Galatians 1:18, 19. [50] Galatians 2:9. [51] Acts 21:18.

Christian community throttled itself by its failure to accept the universal implications of the gospel.

Thus the program of the Christian movement became universal in its appeal. It was a presentation of Christ by individual witnessing. Missionaries, like the apostle Paul, were being sent out to establish Christian communities in Gentile centers. Organization remained simple. Paul recognized different offices and they seemed to have different functions.[52] Later on bishops, or overseers, were appointed. The program was one of establishing Christian communities through the witnessing of believers in Christ.

The Christian Movement in the Gentile World

When Christianity moved out into the Gentile world and became in reality a Gentile movement, it was confronted with a new set of problems. First of all, it was brought face to face with Greek thought. This necessitated a re-interpretation of the Christian movement against the background of Greek thought-forms. This the Fourth Gospel was written to do. And in it are such words as logos, light, life, and truth—all familiar to the Greek mind. And in their Christian interpretation, a new meaning was given to them.

Heretical sects.—The so-called heretical sects constituted a second problem. Chief among these was the gnostic group. Gnosticism was one of many attempts to explain the nature of Christ. The Gnostics claimed to have a discernment of religious truth superior to that of which the ordinary Christian was capable. They emphasized the deity of Jesus at the expense of his humanity. Some even went so far as to claim that the Son of God born in Nazareth was not a babe but a full-grown man descended from heaven and that he felt no pain upon the cross because his human form was a mere appearance. The writer of the Johannine gospel and letters undoubtedly had this sect in mind when he wrote. 1 John 4:2 expressly affirms that Jesus did ''come in the flesh'' and was written to deny gnostic affirmations. Gnosticism threatened to engulf the Christian faith. It made the greatest crisis the church faced since Paul's struggle for freedom from Judaism.

---

[52] Ephesians 4:11.

The church was in no condition to stop the work of these sects. Christianity from the beginning had been a free, loosely organized movement. It was impossible to make a concerted effort. The apostles, who had companioned with Jesus, had been at first the interpreters of the Christian message and had constituted an adequate authority to which to appeal. But by the end of the first century these men had passed from the scene of action. Eyewitnesses of the Master's ministry were becoming fewer.

There was, therefore, no final, authoritative interpretation of Jesus' will and purpose. The church was without legal status in the Roman Empire and was in danger of persecution at the whim of any emperor. Clearly, the church except for its great leaders was in no condition for a contest with the heretical sects.

Partly as a result of this contest with heretical sects and partly as a result of other causes, the first creeds of the church were formulated and the New Testament canon made.

Creeds stated.—Need was felt for an authoritative statement of the essentials of faith. Conflicting ideas were being put forth as to the very essence of Jesus' teaching. The church was powerless to prevent the promulgation of any heresy the mind of man might invent. A statement of the essentials of Christianity, it was believed, would prevent the errors of heresy. Men would know the sure grounds of their faith. As a result, the early creeds emerged. They were the subjects of heated debates in ecumenical councils. They never won unanimous consent. But they did have weight as statements of the essentials of faith.

A New Testament canon recognized.—These same causes resulted in the recognition of an authoritative collection of Scriptures. In the beginning of the Christian movement, no need was felt for a written record of events. Jesus had written nothing. The traditions of the rabbis were opposed to further writing. The apostles and disciples were sufficient authority. The expectancy of an early return of the Lord made writing seem unnecessary. But as time passed fragmentary records, blocks of sayings, and accounts of various kinds came into existence.[53] Paul's letters were collected and given circulation. The four Gospels having apostolic authority, and others came into being. The result was a great collection of literature bearing upon the origins of the Christian movement.

But when the heretical sects arose and began to circulate alleged apostolic writings and when some, like Marcion, a gnostic leader, were framing canons, an interest in a genuine collection was awakened.

---

[53] Luke 1:1, 2.

It was seen that the authentic writings must be separated from the spurious accounts. Through a long process of selection, the New Testament books were collected and given the stamp of approval by the church.

Status in the Roman Empire.—When the Christian movement broke with Judaism and its adherents became numerous, the status of the church in the Roman Empire presented a perplexing question. As already stated, the church had no legal recognition. It was subject to persecution for personal and political reasons. It was called upon to endure a series of fiery trials. A half dozen emperors from Marcus Aurelius to Diocletian tried to stamp it out. They only succeeded, however, in turning back the faint-hearted and in writing the crimson story of martyrdom. The church emerged from this struggle secure in its position. The Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. gave it toleration. Its organization was consolidated. Its bishops were given more power. Finally, the papacy came into existence. And at last Christianity became a religion of the Roman state.

Thus the church emerged from these struggles victorious but changed. The free, flexible, loosely organized movement of the first decades was gone. The relatively independent congregations were effectively united. The essentials of faith were stated in creedal form and given official approval. The church even went so far as to exclude from its fellowship those who refused to subscribe to its creed. A canon of Scriptures was made. Officials were multiplied and given great power. The pope at its head claimed universal dominion and at times attempted with success to make and unmake kings.

Witnessing continued.—Through all this struggle, when the very life of Christianity was at stake, the witnessing of the gospel went on. Men looked to an ideal that had been exemplified in Christ. They tried to follow his way. And while organizational forms changed and the Christian group expressed itself through a great institution, the simple testimony of Christian witnesses endured.

THE GERMANIC INVASIONS

Before the crises just described were fully met, the church faced another danger which leveled every other Roman institution. The Roman Empire had always had difficulty in defending its northern boundary. The decline of Roman power finally made a successful defense no longer possible. From the north of Europe, hordes came pouring into the Roman domain. This deluge of barbarism and superstition all but vanquished the church. The low morals of the invaders, who were won by thousands to the Christian movement, affected the standards of Christian living. Ignorance and superstition were foes the equal of any the church had ever faced. But the church endured. It fostered what little education there was in those dim centuries. Through art, images and illustrated page it attempted to teach to ignorant minds the basic Christian truths. Noble gothic architecture expressing man's upreach to God was developed. Impressive ritual commanded respect for God and the church. The Scriptures were faithfully kept. While the Roman Empire was sundered and its institutions shattered, the church lived on.

THE REFORMATION

Solidarity was an ideal of the medieval church. But solidarity had never been entirely achieved. Heretical sects were constantly springing into existence. Nonconforming groups, such as the Cathari and the Waldenses, always were active. There was a Hus for every age. The East and the West since the days of Constantine had gone separate ways.

But in spite of these nonconforming groups, the western church presented a remarkably strong and united front. Its temporal power was sufficient to affect the destiny of nations. It acquired great wealth. In some parts of Europe, it is estimated, the church owned one-third of the land. The popes figured in the maneuvering of European politics. Kings lost their kingdoms because they lost the favor of popes; princes gained empires because of papal good will.

But the church abused its power. Its tithes and taxes went to pay the extravagances of its priests and popes. Its political scheming was directed merely to sustaining its own power. Dissenters and nonconformers were ruthlessly excluded from its folds. The simple, upright living of the humble Nazarene seemed almost forgotten.

The protest against the dead formalism of its ritual, the abuse of its political power, the wasting of its material resources and the corruption of its officials found expression in the Protestant Reformation at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Its leadership was expressed in the person of Martin Luther of Germany. Other men were emboldened to take a stand. Soon northern and central Europe were aflame with revolt. Other forces, such as the movement for nationalism, joined the protest. The solidarity of the Roman church was broken. Papal power was reduced. The worth of the individual was re-emphasized. Innumerable sects arose. The map of Europe was changed. A new era for mankind was begun.

Space does not permit a more detailed outline of the development of the Christian movement. But as one studies its history, two facts stand out: the impregnability of the church and the missionary character of the Christian religion.

Impregnability of the Church

To speak of the impregnability of the church, does not imply that Christianity has always been the same. Christianity has never been free from the influences of its surroundings. It has been colored by every age in which it lived. When it moved from its Palestinian birthplace to the centers of Roman life and thought and won a legal right to exist, its institutional form became patterned after the Roman hierachy. When it moved into the realm of Greek thought, Christianity tended to express itself in terms of Greek concepts. The influx of pagans from northern Europe lowered the moral tone of Christianity and immorality crept into the church. Emphasis on democracy in government found expression in the church in a stressing of democratic life and forms. The individualism of the nineteenth century was echoed in the doctrines of individual salvation in the church. The questions in the early years of the twentieth century brought to the church an emphasis upon the social gospel and the Kingdom of God.

But this is not to say that Christianity goes only in the direction in which the wind is blowing. It is not a fluctuating movement. The church is not a vacillating institution. There is an enduring element. In every age, in one sense at least, Christianity has been the same. It has ever pointed men to God. However imperfect its life has been, it has always tried to reproduce the life of Jesus. It has called men to an ideal of life. It has kept this ideal constantly before the world. And while at times it has been slow to discard dead forms, it has kept itself alive and vital and forward-moving by its appeal to live the, as yet, unattained Christlike life. And so forms come and go, morals advance and recede, yet the simple attempt to reproduce Jesus' way of living goes on. This is the continuing element—and the heart—of the Christian movement.

THE MISSIONARY CHARACTER OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

The Christian religion is essentially missionary. There is an authority for missions apart from any command of Jesus. It is implicit in the nature of Christianity itself. The Christian religion places a primary emphasis upon the worth of the individual. And the individual is not measured in terms of race or clan, but according to his potentialities as a child of God. He may therefore be a brother to every other man. Mutual regard and helpfulness are at the heart of Christianity. Fellowship is its indispensable quality. The right of every individual to realize the best of which he is capable is acknowledged. The obligation to help others so to attain is recognized. Brotherhood, helpfulness, and fellowship are the elements of missionary living. They are the elements of the life of the Christian.

Thus by its very nature, Christianity cannot be non- or antimissionary. It could not remain a sect of Judaism. Bursting the bonds of Jewish racial and national exclusiveness was as inevitable as the ebb of the tides. In spite of confining the first preaching to the ''lost sheep of the house of Israel,'' Gentiles heard and believed. They could not be kept out. The issue was raised. And it is to the credit of men like Stephen and Philip and Paul that they saw the real implications of the gospel. The course of history has vindicated their judgment. Christianity by its nature is missionary.

In every age the church has had its missionaries. It is a marvel how far they penetrated the Mediterranean world in the first generation of the Christian movement. Great centers were established in cities like Ephesus, Rome, and Alexandria. These became radiating centers of missionary activity. Africa, Asia, Europe and the new Americas were penetrated by heralds of the cross. No land has been too distant, no task too hard, no danger too great to stay the going of brave missionary spirits. They have endured privations. They have suffered martyrdom. But the courageous witnessing of these intrepid souls has done more than anything else to reveal the essential nature of Christian living.

THE PRESENT MESSAGE AND PROGRAM

The vicissitudes of the Christian movement have indeed been many. The message, however, remains the same. That message is Jesus Christ in all of his implications for the world today. The church is institutionalized—indeed, is many institutions—and must use organization on a wide scale. But its program remains the same. It bears witness to the worth of Jesus Christ and calls men to the life of good will.

FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. What became of the Judaizing movement in Christianity?
2. How did the church meet the crisis of the World War?
3. The effect of an antimissionary attitude on a congregation or religious body.
4. The contribution of the Reformation.
5. The development of Gothic architecture.
6. The modern emphasis upon the "social" gospel.
7. The development of the doctrines, the "authority of the church" and the "authority of the Bible."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Joseph, Oscar, L.: The Historical Development of Christianity, Scribners.
Scott, E. F.: The Gospel and Its Tributaries, Scribners.
The Beginnings of the Church, chaps. iii, v, vi, ix, x, Scribners.
Walker, Williston: A History of the Christian Church, Scribners.
Smith, G. B.: Principles of Christian Living, chaps. iv, v, vi, The University of Chicago Press.
Kent, G. F.: The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus, chap. xxiv, Scribners.
Goodspeed, Edgar J.: The Formation of the New Testament, The University of Chicago Press.
Streeter, Canon: The Primitive Church, Macmillan.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIVING

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 5:20.—For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 22:37, 39.—And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Is it difficult to know what is right and what is wrong? Why?
2. Why did not Jesus give a set of rules?
3. How did Jesus meet a situation?
4. What is creative living?
5. What does following Jesus mean?
6. What did Jesus mean by "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees"?

DID JESUS' MESSAGE INVOLVE A WAY OF LIFE?

Jesus' message may well be stated in terms of living. In truth, he revealed a way of life. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them."[1] "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."[2]

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."[3] These and many other expressions that may be gathered indicate that Jesus was concerned with a way of life. In fact, the citizens of the Kingdom were to be those who *did* the will of God or who lived the life of love.

---

[1] Matthew 7:12. [2] Matthew 7:21. [3] Matthew 23:11.

Jesus did not merely talk about the way men should live. He set the example by living above reproach. His was a Godlike life. One may turn to him and find the way God would have men live.

This is not to say that Jesus merely ''went about doing good.'' His ministry was more than mere busyness. It was based upon profound convictions. He had beliefs. Indeed, his way of life involves belief in God, in man, and in the benevolent purpose at the heart of the universe. To interpret Jesus' message as involving a way of life apart from fundamental beliefs is to limit the meaning of his ministry beyond what the facts will justify.

Any attempt to emulate Jesus' way of life requires a degree of discrimination. No one will follow him in certain details of his life. He did not marry. Apparently, he quit his work and lived off the hospitality of friends. Manifestly, it is impossible for the human race to follow the example of Jesus in his daily habits. Christian living is not the mere imitation of the routine of Jesus' life. It is rather the practice of the life of supreme good will; it is following him in a creative life of love.

The Difficulty of Living the Christian Way

A tendency to oversimplify the problem of Christian living is evident in present-day life. Many carelessly say, ''O it is easy to know what is right and to do it.'' Others glibly say the perplexing social difficulties our world faces are to be met by "applying the principles of Jesus." And this application is conceived to be a task no more difficult than that of spreading ointment on a wound. Jesus' way of life without doubt is in some quarters made too simple and easy.

The one who makes Christian living a simple matter probably has never thought deeply, or he has ignored many factors that need to be taken into account. He reduces the Christian life to a matter of mere personal respectability. Its ethical significance is overlooked. It is not made to involve the whole process of living. The intricate difficulties of our social relations are not seen in true perspective. The Christian way of life can be made simple only by overlooking many important factors.

How May Jesus' Way of Life Be Attained?

To tell men they ought to be filled with the spirit of Jesus and to have his attitude toward all of life, is not enough to guarantee Christian living. It is useless to tell them to live the life of love unless they are helped to know how such a life may be lived. Men need to know the technique, or the method, by which the highest Christian living may be attained. Our preachments should be supplemented by explanations of the techniques of Christian living. The question then every Christian faces is, How may Jesus' way of life be lived?

The method of Jesus.—Since Jesus demonstrated what he asks us to do, that is, live the life of supreme good will, a study of his method is in order.

The first step in the process Jesus used in meeting a situation was an open-minded approach to the facts. He did not jump to conclusions. He looked beneath the surface. He saw beyond the overt act. He tried to find the fundamental cause. He constantly discovered factors that others overlooked. When a ruler who meticulously kept the Law came to ask what further he needed to do, Jesus did not add to his self-esteem by pronouncing the man perfect before the Law. Jesus looked beyond the mere observance of rules to the self-righteousness and the selfishness that dominated the man's life. He saw what the keepers of the Law could not see. He brought clearly into view the issues the man must face.

By the strict standards of his day, the woman Jesus met at the well near Sychar[4] was fit only to be stoned. But the possibilities of a response to the life of love and the decency that was dormant in her heart were factors which many a teacher of his day would have overlooked. Jesus, however, with penetrating insight saw them and sought to capitalize them to the salvation of the woman.

Upon another occasion, Jesus found what is so often overlooked. When a woman, in a supreme act of devotion, anointed him with costly ointment, the utilitarian-minded saw in this a wanton waste.[5] Why should not this ointment have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor? The same dull vision is in evidence today. The lover who would show his devotion to his sweetheart by a gift of flowers is advised to save his money against the economic demands of married life. The church that builds a beautiful

[4] John 4:5. [5] Mark 14:3-9.

tower or installs an expensive organ is charged with wasting money. But Jesus saw here what so many never see. Values are not all tangible and expressed with dollar signs. The gratitude and love and devotion of the human heart may well find expression even in priceless tangibles and the cries of utilitarianism should not stop it.

Jesus dealt with motives.—Having made an open-minded approach, which took him to the very heart of a situation, Jesus then sought to touch those hidden springs which would make operative the life of love. He sought to establish right motives. Coercion, restraint, rules, Jesus knew would never make men what they should be. The mainsprings of men's lives are found in motives and impulses. Men do not love by compulsion; they love by impulsion. So the good impulses of the woman were not stifled even though the ointment could have been sold for a large sum. The man was made to see that the careful keeping of the Law when it was not a matter of the heart would not bring the good life. Zacchaeus, because his motives were reached, was prompted to give half of his goods to the poor and to offer to restore fourfold any unjust exaction he may have made.[6] It was into the realm of motives and impulses that Jesus went.

Many Have Missed the Method of Jesus

It goes without saying that the creative method of Jesus is not followed by all who would live his way. They have made his "teachings" so many rules.

---

[6] Luke 19:8.

And Christian living has been reduced to a matter of living by rule. Many devout persons today have the conviction that they can turn to the Bible and find explicit guidance for any situation they may ever face. The difference between right and wrong is for them a simple matter. Some passage of Scripture is sure to fit exactly the situation. Man, meeting a difficulty, has but to turn to the appropriate passage and do what it tells him.

But this is a mistaken technique. It makes the Bible a mere rule book, and the Bible was never intended to be used as such. It reduces life to obeying rules. It throws one into confusion if the needed rule cannot be instantly found. Creative living becomes impossible. Living, as exemplified by Jesus, must rise above rules.

The limitation of rules.—The limitations of rules are readily seen when examination is made of those realms of life that depend upon rule. Statutes are rules and as such have their limitations. Yet how frequently they must be changed! During the sessions of the state legislatures and the national congress every year there are thousands of statutes enacted. These are rules governing the conduct of the citizens of the country. And yet merely to live within the law does not make for the highest living. Jurists are frank to say that law only restrains, that it does not make men good. Only as the citizen rises above the law and lives in keeping with the great principles back of them can creative living be attained.

JESUS DID NOT IMPOSE RULES

Jesus himself did not live by rules. Indeed it was at this very point that he came into conflict with the Pharisees. This group had turned the Law into an elaborate system of rules. It was through the Law, they believed, that God had made his revelations to them. Salvation was to be obtained only by a careful following of the Law. But the Law was general and life was specific. So there was in process of development in the days of Jesus an "oral law," or "tradition," which made application of the Law to concrete situations. This oral Law had been developed with great elaborateness by the rabbinical schools.

Jesus and the pharisaic system.—Now, Jesus took issue with this manner of living. His creative nature could not be so bound. He would live by principle, not by rule. Not that he was concerned to set aside the Law. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfil."[7] Nor was he concerned to abolish "tradition." He kept it at many points. His chief contention was against the Pharisee's manner of living, a way that reduced life to a formula and regulated conduct by rules. He defended his disciples when they did not keep the ceremonials the traditions presented. On this point he attacked the Pharisees, charging them with nullifying the commandment of God. "Full well do ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your tradition."[8] "And ye have made void the word of God

[7] Matthew 5:17. [8] Mark 7:9.

because of your tradition.''[9] The Law and the prophets, he said, might be simplified and summed up in two statements, ''Thou shalt love the Lord thy God'' and ''Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'' ''On these two commandments the whole law hangeth and the prophets.''[10] The Law would endure as principles but not as rules. Living must rise to the level of principle.

Jesus did not live by rule and neither did he impose rules upon his followers. ''Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.''[11] The Pharisees had the righteousness of rules. His followers' righteousness must rise above rules. The Kingdom of Heaven is not regulated by rule. Jesus meant that men should live the life of love in all the situations of their existence. The only limitations to men's activities he set were those imposed by the very nature of love. And the more one studies Jesus, the more convinced one becomes that he did not enact rules or statutes. He sought rather to impart a spirit of living, to develop an attitude of life.

Obstacles to the Interpretation of Jesus' Teaching as Rules of Conduct

Many obstacles confront the one who would find in Jesus' teaching ready-made formulas for Christian living. And chief among these obstacles is the meagerness of our records of his life and teaching.

---

[9] Matthew 15:6. [10] Matthew 22:40. [11] Matthew 5:20.

The records of Jesus' life.—These records were written before the idea of scientific history was born. Men did not see the necessity for a complete and carefully written account. No one bothered to collect documents that a full and accurate history of Jesus' ministry might be written or that an exact statement of his words might be preserved. No one who moved amidst those heated scenes wrote a diary that future generations might read. Jesus himself wrote nothing and seemed indifferent as to a written record of either his deeds or his words. It was not a day of scientific history writing.

Jesus lived in a day when books were produced more sparingly than they are in this era of printing presses. Probably four decades passed after Jesus' death before Mark, the earliest of our gospels, was written. Paul had written before the Second Gospel was produced, but he had not emphasized the deeds or quoted many of the "sayings" of Jesus. Three or four decades later found three other gospel records to existence. Some other records were produced, Luke attests,[12] but most of them were lost. So virtually our only record of Jesus' ministry and teaching is the New Testament and particularly the four Gospels.

And none of these four accounts claims to give a full record of Jesus' life and teaching. They seem to have been written for specific purposes and their authors selected the materials that would best accomplish the desired ends. Luke plainly states his purpose,[13] and the writer of the Fourth Gospel affirms that his account was written to create faith.[14]

---

[12] Luke 1:1. [13] Luke 1:4. [14] John 20:31.

The Gospels are not biographies in the sense that they give a complete record of Jesus' life. The Gospel according to John expressly disclaims completeness. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did," it reads, "the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written."[15] Put the four accounts together and many questions in the minds of men are still unanswered. Just what sort of home life did Jesus have in Nazareth? What was his education? What took place in his mind that led him to seek baptism of John? What were the real relations between him and John the Baptist? These and many other questions are left unanswered by the gospel writers. The Gospels are more strictly interpretations. And priceless though they are, they give only partial accounts of Jesus' life and ministry.

Jesus' silence on certain issues.—The one who looks to Jesus for rules for solving great social problems will be struck by his silence on many questions of his day, so far as our records go. He had nothing to say about slavery. And yet slavery was the curse of the Mediterranean world when he lived. In some centers, slaves outnumbered freemen four to one. They had few rights. They could be scourged and even murdered and there was no recourse. The temples and public buildings and the great show places that kings were wont to build were erected too often by the unrequited toil of slaves. And yet from the pages of the Gospels comes no record of a trenchant pronouncement of Jesus against a system

[15] John 21:25.

that wantonly outraged men. While Jesus' own race was not guilty in this regard, yet he could not have been ignorant of the existence of this evil.

No word was said by Jesus as to the best form of political organization. Yet almost from the beginning of the human race, this has been the subject of numerous experiments on the part of man. Even today the student of government will not admit that the final and best form has been found. And yet upon this question which touches everyone, Jesus was silent. And it was a burning question in his day.

War has troubled mankind since the dawn of history. And Jesus' race was not unlike its contemporaries with regard to this evil. Long trails of war, conquest, plots, and revolts characterized Israel's history. And even while his ministry was going on, the Zealots were eager to hear the call to arms. The messianic hope many expected to be realized through a military leader. Jesus' attitude toward war is unmistakable, yet he gave no time to the condemnation of this colossal sin.

Refusal to give a rule.—There were occasions, too, when Jesus might easily have laid down some rule. One day a man came asking that Jesus make his brother divide an inheritance with him. Here was an opportunity to make a rule for such situations. But Jesus almost curtly put aside the opportunity. ''Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?'' And then was revealed Jesus' chief concern. He turned and said, ''Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness.''[16] A teaching on attitude, not a rule, was all that Jesus would give.

[16] Luke 12: 14, 15.

Thus it is evident that it was not part of the strategy of Jesus to speak upon every question of his day or to condemn every great sin in the Mediterranean world. And the one who is seeking for some specific utterance from his teaching for every situation is doomed to disappointment.

New situations.—The one who tries to use the teaching of Jesus in this way will meet another obstacle. Many situations, not comparable to anything in Jesus' day, have since arisen. The corporate organization of business is one of them. Here men organize under the law in order to carry on business on a larger scale. The corporation becomes an impersonal entity. If you have a grievance against it, you find difficulty in discovering the responsible person. It deals with men impersonally. Thousands of men are employed to carry on its manifold operations and any shift in its fortunes affects these men and their families. Staggering aggregates of capital are brought under the control of a single group of men. One corporation was offered recently a billion dollars for its establishment. A single group of bankers may hold the credit of an entire nation. There seems to be no end to the genius of man to organize resources of men and money. Even though Palestine was situated at the crossroads of the world's trade life, Jesus saw nothing to compare to the gigantic corporation of today.

The machinizing of industry, so characteristic of modern processes, was unknown in the time of Jesus. Then the processes of manufacturing were carried through by one person in his home or shop. Now a workingman takes his dinner pail, rides thirty minutes on a bus or a street car, punches a time clock and for eight or ten hours becomes a human cog in a machine. He must become an automaton or his value as a human cog is lessened. The effects of the machine in industry have been far-reaching, not only upon workmen but upon all of human society. Production has been speeded up in an unprecedented way. Luxuries abound. Leisure time has increased. Commercialized amusements flourish. The city with its tenements, its traffic jams, its congestion; the country with its tractors and combines; the oil fields with their forests of derricks and miles of pipe lines; the home with its electrical appliances, its radios and telephones—all have combined to produce conditions, some good, some ill, that were unthought of in Jesus' day.

The idea of world unity, based upon mutual good will and understanding, and the political forms necessary to realize it, were not thought of in Jesus' day. World unity as conceived then was world dominion achieved by conquest and the forcible dissemination of culture, as Alexander the Great had attempted three hundred years previous. But steamship, cable, airplane, Zeppelin, wireless, newspaper have knit the world together into an intricate but indissoluble unit. Good will and understanding have not yet been achieved. And the development of political forms that will make possible the living of the world in these intimate relationships is as yet in a stage of feeble experimentation. And no specific word of Jesus tells us whether to join the League of Nations, the World Court with or without reservations, or some other form of world organization. As far as any specific utterance is concerned, the world seems to be upon its own.

Numerous practical questions press at once for answer when a manufacturer decides to run his establishment according to the ideals of Jesus. What wages shall be paid? Will the men work six, eight, or ten hours a day? Will they work five, five and a half, or six days a week? Will their pay continue on holidays? Will some profit-sharing plan be operated? Will shop committees be instituted? These and other questions must be answered to make Jesus' ideals operative in that concern. Yet no word of Jesus speaks specifically concerning these issues.

Now, what are the implications of all these statements? Does it mean that Jesus does not speak to our modern life? Do they seek to belittle his worth? Not at all. Jesus does speak, but not in rules. He speaks in the great ideal of a life of good will. He speaks in his attitude of love for men. This is his message for our present day.

Jesus did not express his teachings in rules. He talked to the situations of his day. He was anxious to make love operate in the life about him. He was wise enough to know that, after all, this was the most effective way to teach the life of love. It needed demonstration. It was too new to the practices of men. Demonstration would succeed where precepts could only fail.

Had Jesus intended to cast his teaching in the form of rules, he would have conducted his ministry in a far different way. He would have been more explicit at many points. He would not have been silent on many questions that faced his generation. He might have committed much to writing. He would have made provision for the application of his teaching in future contingencies. Clearly he was a teacher of another kind.

Jesus' method.—When Jesus faced a situation—a blind man seeking sight, a multitude desiring food, a friend calling for help, mothers asking a touch of the hand for their babes, a Pharisee propounding questions—he sought to show the way of love. He tried to help men to live as brothers and to excel in human service. This to him was the will of God.

The situations Jesus faced presented a newness which he was ready to recognize. They were not so many "typical" cases which could be treated by thumbing a rule book. His break with the methods of the Pharisees meant that he chose to work by a different method. The tragedy, the heartache, the urgent need in the lives of those who faced him made rules forever obsolete and gave to each case a freshness that only a bungler could fail to see.

Bible not a set of rules.—Not only have men tried to turn the teaching of Jesus into a set of rules, but they have attempted to use the entire Bible that way. But such a use of the Scriptures involves an erroneous method of interpretation. Frequently, it has been said that one can prove anything by the Bible. Of course this is not true. But opposing sides have many times fervently and honestly quoted the Scriptures to sustain their respective contentions. In the days of slavery, slave labor was defended and condemned by the use of the Scriptures. Intemperance in regard to alcoholic liquors has been approved and condemned from the scriptural standpoint. And today war is sustained in the same way and it is likewise disapproved. The Bible has been made a collection of proof texts. And too often men have gone to it to find proof for what was already in their minds. To use the Bible as a set of rules invariably leads to its misinterpretation and its misuse.

This use of the Bible results in a narrow, legalistic attitude. Men become greatly concerned over the smaller things of life. They ''tithe mint and anise and cummin'' and become so absorbed in the process that they neglect the weightier matters of justice, mercy, and righteousness. They take a negative attitude toward life and become concerned more about what they cannot do rather than what they can. Men do not become morally independent when bound to rules. It is only as they rise above rule that they become morally free.

This does not argue that certain texts or passages cannot be quoted as applicable to specific situations. A multitude of scriptural statements may be so used. But the reason they can be used is because they express principles that may be made operative in present situations.

The Method of the Christian

Discover the factors.—The one who is Christian will do his best to make love reign in every situation that confronts him. He may well begin as did Jesus with an open-minded approach that searches for the controlling and often hidden factors. The Christian, true to the spirit of Jesus, can do no differently. The

Christian *is* open-minded, ready to hear and heed the truth. The disciple, by virtue of being a disciple, is a learner. He must search until every factor is known. If race prejudice, or pride, or envy, or the love of mammon stand in the way of a life of love, these factors must be discovered and recognized as hindrances to Christian living.

Arouse motives.—The Christian, having done his best to discover all the factors in the situation before him, will seek to arouse the motives that will produce Christian outcomes. For the motives of men must be Christianized, if men are to be Christian. The drives that give direction to men's living must be brought under Christian control. The objectives of Christianity are found in motives. To direct these motives to expression in Christian activity is the supreme duty of the followers of Christ.

The techniques for stimulating and directing motives have not been sufficiently developed. It is a great stride when one reaches the point where he sees Christian living as rooting in motives. Christian education is but a process of motivation. It is in the realm of guiding and directing the motives and impulses of men that contributions to the technique of Christian living will be made.

The Use of the Scriptures

A question, pertinent to raise at this time, is the use that will be made of the Scriptures in a method that seeks to change and direct the motives of men. Suffice it to say they will have a more effective place than they have ever held. They are less likely to be misused or their meaning distorted than has been the case too often in the past. A profounder understanding of them must be had. The great experience of the Hebrew race in finding God will remain one of the classics in the religious experience of mankind. The deep eternal meanings of Jesus' teaching will be valid for all times. And more effective in its appeal to the motives of men than abstract principles or demands of duty will ever be the appeal of a loving Savior who dared all in a glorius venture of living the life of love. He who trod the lowly path of service to a cross-crowned hill will flood men's hearts with love when all other appeals have failed. It is imperative that Christians have a profound understanding of the Word of God.

The follower of Jesus will seek to use the Scriptures as the Master used them. Jesus seemed to be saturated with their thought. In the critical moments of his life, a Scripture passage seemed ever upon his lips.[17] His own experience of life seemed so near the profound experiences of his race that the Scriptures came to be for him an expression of the deeper meanings of his own existence. He used them not as subjects for preachments but as expressions of the meanings of life itself. They were not sources of rules and codes, but of principles for the guidance of life.

CREATIVE LIVING

What will be the result if Christians look to the great underlying principles of Jesus' teaching? What will be the outcome if they seek to reproduce his attitudes and to live the life of love rather than turn his teaching into a set of rules?

---

[17] Matthew 4:4-16; Mark 15:34; and others.

Such living will transform life into a moral and spiritual quest. Men will seek to duplicate in their own lives Jesus' experience of the Father. They will try to have his profound insight into life. They will seek his skill in the effective living of the principle of love. If prejudice or hatred, stand in the way of the life of love, these factors will be recognized and dealt with as controlling elements in the situation. The Bible will be made a living book. It will not be considered a set of rules to be memorized; it will become the record of the race's profoundest religious experiences to be understood and used. It will be the sublime story of Jesus' experience of God and of his successful effort to live the life of love. And all the while more effective methods for reproducing Jesus' way in human living will be devised. Life will become explorative, zestful, growing.

This method will make for moral independence. Men will become alert to make dominant the principle of love in the new situations that constantly arise. If Jesus had spent his time in making rules of conduct, however wise he was, many of them no doubt would have become obsolete before his own generation passed. Men would have been bound to unworkable rules which they dare not repudiate without seeming to deny their Master. But as it is the Christian is not bound to dead rules, nor does he have to revise codes. In the experimental spirit and attitude of Jesus he can approach life to discover the forces that make it. He can devise methods that will bring these forces under the control of the Christian ideal. He becomes then a real brother of Christ and joins with him in the general experiment of living the life of love. Such living gives one a moral independence that the slavish following of rules never affords.

And, finally, this sort of living makes one creatively Christian. The individual becomes a searcher for the deepest meanings of life. He goes in quest of higher and more effective ways of living. Living becomes a great experiment. Past and present attainments do not suffice. Every new situation challenges to a fresh venture in Christian achievement. The one who so lives turns his face toward the lavendars of the new day and bathes perpetually in the light of eternal dawn.

FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. How right motives may be developed.
2. How the life of love may be lived in modern industry.
3. The way of love in international relationships.
4. How may one live creatively?
5. What makes right conduct so hard to determine?
6. How should the Bible be used in the guidance of conduct?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mathew, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chap. iv, Macmillan.
Smith, G. B.: Principles of Christian Living, chap. vii, The University of Chicago Press.
Bundy, Walter E.: The Religion of Jesus, chap. i, Bobbs-Merrill.

Scott, E. F.: The Ethical Teachings of Jesus, Macmillan.
Bailey, John W.: Christianity a Way of Life and Belief, chaps. v, vi, vii, The Judson Press.
Shackford, John W.: The Program of the Christian Religion, chap. iv, The Methodist Book Concern.

CHAPTER V

BUILDING A PROGRAM FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

SCRIPTURES

ACTS 2:42.—And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

MARK 16:15.—And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Is the church a group of persons, a place to meet, or an abstract term that applies to all the followers of Jesus? Why?
2. What is the function of the church as distinguished from the functions of other institutions?
3. Are programs and the "life of the spirit" incompatible? Why?
4. What is the place of the minister in the development of programs?
5. How should one go about finding out what should be known in order to build a program intelligently?
6. What goals should a church set?

CONCEPTIONS OF THE CHURCH AND ITS FUNCTION

Before one considers the building of a program for a church, he should have a clear conception of its function and place in the social order. Such a conception is often lacking among church men. Many have no adequate notion of the work the church should do in the world. Others, having some idea of the part the church should play, hold widely divergent views. This confusion as to the function of the church stands in the way of effective program building.

A society of the respectable.—Some regard the church as a sort of society of the respectable and church membership as a badge of respectability. Those who hold this view are not attracted to the membership of the church by the convictions that motivate Christians to serve humanity and to live up to Christian ideals. They come to the church because they feel it is respectable to do so. The church is a club. Its function is to carry on certain charitable enterprises and to furnish its membership a fellowship restricted to a select class.

The service the person holding this view of the church renders will be somewhat limited. He will probably attend the Sunday morning meetings quite regularly. Other gatherings will be attended as occasion demands. He will not be in those offices and departments where arduous duties must be done. Only positions that involve little trouble and great respectability will be accepted. Obligations will largely be discharged by the writing of bank checks. The inconveniences and drudgery of daily duty will be shunned. Service to the needy will be left largely to organized charities. In fact, the life of the church will be reduced to its simplest forms and its services will be done largely by professionals.

The program of such a church will be very simple. The routine services will be held and they will tend to be ritualistic in order to give them the most respectable appearance. No great evangelistic fervor will be displayed, for evangelism would break the exclusivism which preserves their coveted respectability. Such a church makes no pronouncement against the social evils of the day. These problems are considered quite beyond the province of the church. Calm preaching, perfect ritual, well-trained voices in the choir, dues paid, social affairs—these make up the life of such a church.

A refuge.—There are others who look upon the church as a refuge. Life seems harsh and something from which one would escape. Its outcomes appear uncertain. The "other world" allures. The church furnishes a retreat and gives a surety of feeling found nowhere else. Temporary defeat will give way to ultimate triumph. And this security which the church affords is obtained by accepting the beliefs of the group and by doing certain acts.

The program of such a church will be largely one of indoctrination of the young and of appeal to those who have not joined its ranks. It will be concerned to share its security with everyone. Recruitment will constitute the major portion of its activities. Ethical living will have bearing only upon the safety the individual desires.

A dynamic enterprise.—Another view holds the church to be a dynamic enterprise that expresses its life to the ends of the earth. It has a mission of social helpfulness. It has a definite task to do. It is not a society that exists merely for its own members. It has a work of world-wide character and acknowledges an obligation to all men. This kind of church does not live oblivious to the life about it. It becomes disturbed over sinful social relations and areas spiritually needy and will know no peace until the Christian way prevails.

The person holding this view will find himself a worker in the church. His obligations will not be met in an impersonal way. He will make himself a vital factor in the enterprise and will seek to serve in whatever capacity he can.

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH?

If the foregoing paragraph represents the actual situation, it goes without saying that confusion as to the function of the church exists. And, when one realizes that the function as it is conceived determines the nature of the program, the need for clear statement or definition is at once apparent.

Jesus did not reveal the function of the church in any direct statement of his that has come to us.[1] Its function will have to be discovered from some other source.

The church is composed of the persons who believe in Jesus Christ and who are trying to live the life of supreme good will as he taught it. These followers of Jesus are under commission by the very nature of the life of love to seek to share it with others. They seek to sustain one another in every effort to live a life acceptable to God and to unite their resources in promoting the cause of Christ.

Provide a fellowship.—Here then is found the function of the church. It is first of all to provide a fellowship. This fellowship sustains the followers of Jesus in their efforts to live the life of love. It furnishes a society wherein one may learn to live the Christian way. Within the church activities which afford practice in this kind of living are conducted. The good life is stimulated by this sharing on the part of the followers of Jesus.

---

[1] Matthew 16:18 and 18:17 are the only recorded statements of his about the church and they do not give any clear idea as to function.

Enlist others.—The function of the church is to enlist others in the effort to live Jesus' way. The Christian group has a message of "good news"—a message of the worth of the life of supreme good will. This message must be made known to all the earth and men must be persuaded to hear and give it heed.

Such is the function of the church. "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."[2] "Ye shall be my witnesses."[3] The function of the church is fellowship and enterprise. The church exists to provide sustaining fellowship for those who are trying to live the Christian way and to conduct an enterprise to make this way known and acceptable to all men.

DOES THE CHURCH NEED A PLAN OF ACTION?

If the conception of the church as a society of the respectable should prevail, there would then be no need for considering a program or plan of action. Such a church would be concerned largely with maintaining its meetings and paying its dues. It would not think of enlarging its usefulness, of reaching out into the community to serve the unfortunate, of sending its youth to distant lands to preach and teach the gospel. It would maintain a discreet aloof-

[2] Acts 2:42. [3] Acts 1:8.

ness from business, from politics and from those other areas of life where men live. It would not seek to interpret and give direction to the movements of the day. No program beyond that of maintaining its weekly meetings would be required. Program would give way to routine, ritual, and formality.

But, if the church conceives itself as a fellowship of Christ's followers, united in an enterprise to make prevail a new way of living, then a program or plan of action is needed. When the church takes its task seriously, plans and programs emerge. Statesmanship, looking into future years, does not move haphazardly. The church when it becomes an enterprise to bring in the Kingdom of God will demand a program.

WHO SHOULD BUILD THE PROGRAM?

Who should build the program of the church? This is a pertinent question and should be answered at the outset.

The minister.—"The preacher," many will reply without hesitation when this query is made. And to justify their answer they will say that he is the acknowledged leader of the church group. It is his profession to lead. He is specially trained to plan and administer a program for the church. He is employed by the church and hence can give time to such a task. He is in touch with all phases of the work of the church and consequently is the one best fitted to outline a comprehensive plan of action. Therefore, many contend, the minister should make the program for the church.

But the idea that the minister should build the program of a church is open to challenge. Though professionally trained, can he be expected to know everything about program building? And though he gives all his time to the church, will he not need the help of others in a task as arduous and complicated as the construction of an adequate program for a Christian group? And above all, may not others have some contribution to make to the program of their church?

The governing board.—While some say the minister should build the church program, others contend that the governing board is responsible for the task. The board is continuous while the minister's tenure of office is uncertain. The board contains a large portion of the financial and leadership ability of the church and is therefore able to judge best what the church can do. It also knows the temper of the congregation.

And some even go so far as to say that the minister is to have no voice whatsoever, that the board, and the board alone, is to determine the program of the church.

The congregation.—But may not a more satisfactory way of developing a program for the church be found? Is such a task the exclusive function of the minister or of the governing board? Why not regard program building as an enterprise in which the entire congregation may participate? The church can so build its program that every member, however able or humble, may make any contribution of which he is capable.

Such a procedure is democratic to the core. Furthermore, it is Christian. The ongoing of the Christian enterprise depends upon the co-operation of every member. Jesus sought to draw out the good that was in everyone. The church does not belong to the exclusive, the intellectual aristocrats, the extremely capable. It belongs to all. And any contribution, whatever it is and whoever makes it, should be used to enlarge the life of the church.

But building a program by the entire congregation means a procedure different from what is usually used. Work on outlining it will need to begin weeks and perhaps months in advance of the time it becomes operative. Departments, organizations, or whatever groups comprise the working units of the church will be responsible for submitting plans for their respective tasks. Whether the unit works as a whole or assigns the task to a committee, opportunity will be given every member of the unit to submit what he thinks will constitute an adequate program or items in it.

The governing board of the church, or in some cases a committee created by it, will serve as a central program-making body. Its function will be to stimulate the units to develop their programs, to harmonize the separate plans submitted, and to shape them into a unified and comprehensive whole.

The minister in most cases will be the guiding genius throughout the entire process. Every group will be free to call upon him for counsel. For some parts of the program he will be made largely responsible. His leadership will be recognized throughout. The board will be responsible for bringing it to completion. The congregation adopts the program it has created.

Results of this procedure.—Significant results may be expected from a procedure of this sort. It will make for a program that grows out of the life of the church. It will not be imposed from above, but will grow up from the very foundation. And because everyone has had opportunity to share in the making of the program, more will enter enthusiastically into its administration. Success will be more nearly assured from the very beginning.

Such a procedure in outlining a plan of work will call into action a great deal of otherwise unused leadership. The resources of the church will be more widely used. And no doubt unknown resources will be discovered. The program is more likely to be well balanced. When a small group does the task, the results are likely to show the special interests of the members of the group.

But perhaps the greatest benefit to accrue will be the education the entire congregation receives as it faces its obligations in the light of its resources and opportunities. Many a church member knows only the little corner in which he works. He has no notion of the entire task. He does not see the Christian enterprise in its wide sweep. But when the church engages him in the task of formulating its program and draws on him for any constructive service he may have to give, he is helped to see the implications of outlining a plan of action for a group attempting to build the Kingdom of God.

It should be said in passing that the plan indicated above will not work of its own accord. A group will need to be educated to it. If such a plan is suddenly inaugurated, it is not to be presumed that everyone will have a contribution to make. Many do not care to be burdened with such a task. They prefer to have the leaders prepare a program. When it is made they will approve or disapprove and decide the measure of support they will give. It will take time to educate a church to the point where all will share in the building of its program. And where such is the case, someone must assume responsibility for it and be content with an approximation of the ideal.

Discovering Its Task

Keeping in mind that the entire church will be given the opportunity to participate in outlining the program, is not the first step to discover the task? Here stands the church, an institution in the midst of a community, with the function of making known the ''good news'' in all that this implies. Now, the question is: What shall a group of Christians do in this particular community?

A survey.—The local church should know, first of all, the field in which it is to operate. This means careful surveys should be made preliminary to the development of a program. This will not involve in every instance a ''scientific'' survey by expert surveyors, although such surveys are always valuable. But effort must be made to see the task of the church in a community in all of its implications and with a fair degree of clarity.

Community groups.—Within the constituency of any congregation and the community it serves, will be found many groups that should be considered.

1. First, there will be the members of the church. Means for their enrichment must be provided. Experiences of worship, study, and service must be made possible. Church life for the followers of Jesus should be a process of learning to live the Christian way. The church must provide for such learning. To fail at this point is to invite defeat.

2. The constituency of practically every church contains a group of children and youth. Some of these, of course, are not members of the church. Many may come from homes indifferent or even antagonistic to religion and its institutional expression. However this may be, the best possible provision should be made for these children and youth. The contention is often heard that the most fruitful effort of the church is made on behalf of this group.

3. The young married people constitute a neglected group in many churches. Wherever this element exists, it should be taken into account as the program of the church is formulated. Often no group within the church constituency is found in which these young men and women can happily work. They no longer feel at home in the strictly young people's groups and in some instances they are crowded out. Marriage is a signal for them to move on. And, as a rule, they have few interests common to those of the adults and feel even less at home with them. Consequently they drift from the church. And if ever they needed its sustaining fellowship and ennobling idealism, it is when the foundations of the

new home life are being laid and the long journey to occupational success is in its beginning. Then, these young people may prove to be a fruitful source of leadership for the church, so, for its own sake as well as for theirs, provision for them should be made in the program.

4. Every church probably has within its fellowship a group that it can classify as "friends." Wives and husbands of members and parents of children who are members of some of the auxiliary organizations are among this group. Families living within the vicinity of the church and members of none will be attracted by the fellowship, the music, the preaching, or some other element in the life of the church. These persons, friendly and having a limited part in the fellowship of the church, should be taken into account in the program. Not that they should be specifically named, but rather that ample provision should be made for those features which attract them to the fellowship of the church. By so doing, these "friends" may be won to a more complete identification with the purpose and service of the church.

5. Another group to consider is the disinterested. Their name is legion and they are found in every community. And the Christian must remember that he is debtor to that host of unchurched as well as to those of the household of faith. The church must never become exclusive, but must ever be outreaching and outgoing in its ministrations. The spirit of Christ forbids the church to do otherwise. And every congregation when it outlines its work will take account of these unchurched multitudes. Some of the disinterested will be attracted by the fellow-

ship of the church. Special groups, such as church school classes, will draw others. A number will come only to the special occasions or celebrations of the church. Many will be reached only by extraordinary efforts. But every church should study the appeals it may make to this group and no program should ever be made that does not seek to win the indifferent to the redeeming life of the church.

6. In many communities there are groups that represent special interests and have specific needs. The church must consider these when formulating a program. Men and women who were born in other lands are among these groups. They are found in both urban and rural centers. They cluster about certain industries. Many follow seasonal occupations and move from place to place. Men without families are among them in great numbers. Some are in need of language study. Some need ideals of personal conduct, of home life, of business relations. All need God and the redeeming love of Christ. Many of these groups are untouched by the ministrations of home mission boards and only as they are helped by local congregations will they receive what the church has for them. Where such neglected groups exist, the near-by churches should provide the largest and most intelligent service they can give.

The idea expressed in the foregoing paragraph does not deny the necessity for the scientific administration of such work. For the most part, this work can be done only by skilled workers, and certain phases should be reserved entirely for them. Perhaps a church should serve these groups largely through local boards organized for that purpose. Whatever service is rendered should be intelligently done.

7. If a college or university is situated in the community, the young people in attendance constitute a group to be considered by the church. Here they are, most of them, from other communities with a freedom many have not heretofore enjoyed. The restraints of home are not about them. The church in the college center may not have for these students the ''at home'' feeling of the church from which they came. Consequently, so many do not find a place in church life, and at the time when occupational and intellectual skills are being developed they are lost to the church. What a power for Christ and for God these young people might be if they were held to the church through these critical years! A church dare not ignore them and should make ample provision to meet their needs.

8. In addition to the groups enumerated, the church will frequently find others that need its concern. And modifications in the light of their needs should be made in the development of programs. A church serving an industrial community will find the program required to be different from that needed in a rural community. Another type should be provided by the church that serves a professional class. Hospital centers, railroad terminals, seasonal industries, and so on will demand further modifications. Wherever special classes or conditions exist, they should be considered in the building of the program.

Institutions.—As the church makes a survey of its task, it will discover institutions in the community whose activities need to be taken into account. The public school is everywhere. It has its schedules of events. Demands are made upon the time and energy of children and youth. Some adjustments as to the dating of events may be needed. The church will need to know what the public school is teaching by way of subject matter and morals. Duplication of work may thereby be avoided, and the religious implications of the pupil's experiences pointed out. The Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, Boy Scouts, and many other organizations may be found in the community. Their relations to the church will need definition. It will probably be necessary to modify and adjust the programs of all in the interests of effectiveness.

The survey to discover the task of the church may reveal some special need in the homes of the community. This the church may undertake to supply. And beyond a doubt in this day practically every home within the church constituency will be found to need some help to make it a truly religious home. Here is a great area of need and every church should continually offer its ministrations.

The resources of the church.—When these opportunities of service have been surveyed, the church must then discover its resources. No matter how extensive the needs, it will be folly for some congregations to try to meet all of them. Their limited abilities will not permit. But every church should know its resources and build its program accordingly. And most important of all, it should provide in its plan of work something to increase its resources.

A church has resources of sympathy, leadership, and money. The prejudice of a congregation may stand in the way of a needed ministry to some racial group. Many local churches have limited their service to their own communities because of prejudice against home or world missions. Some items may need to be included in the program to help eradicate these attitudes. Surely the attitudes of a congregation will necessarily be taken into account when programs are projected.

The church will need to know its resources of leadership. Projects cannot be undertaken if leaders are lacking. A program can be no larger than the size and effectiveness of the leadership. The annual plans of the church should provide for challenging potential leaders, for giving them opportunities of development, and for placing them in positions of responsibility.

Resources of money will also need to be known. How many will give to this enterprise or that and what will be the amount of their contributions? These questions must be answered as programs are planned. And the programs themselves should contain provisions for developing the financial resources of the church.

GOALS

When one undertakes to build a program for the church, he is confronted at once with the question, Should goals be set? And immediately there will be those who answer in the negative. But to outline a program implies specific action with a view to achieving definite results. The attainments desired should be definitely stated.

The value of goals.—Goals have especial value. They help to make our activities definite. One who has a goal will be selective in what he does; he will be less likely to scatter his efforts. Goals give direction. They call one to the road ahead when temptation comes to wander in interesting bypaths. They afford a means by which progress may be measured. And any failure may prove a stimulus to complete the task. Success along the way may become a challenge to the fullest attainment. Goals are needed; they help one to do his best.

Difficulties in setting goals.—But the setting of goals presents real difficulties. If the goals require too great an effort to achieve, they are regarded as impossible and hence make no appeal. If they demand little effort, attainment is possible without one's doing his best. The chief difficulty, however, lies in the fact that the ultimate product of the church is so intangible. The church seeks to produce ideals, attitudes, habits. These are not easily measurable. Therefore, goals will need to be set in terms of activities that are likely to bring the final product. And herein is a danger. Attention may be so centered upon the activities that the ultimate outcomes will be lost to view. The round of activities may become the end sought. We have a Sunday school just to have a Sunday school. We sing hymns just to sing hymns. We measure our work by how well the Sunday school runs, or by how well the hymns are sung. Such a use of goals is to defeat their real purpose.

Partial achievement.—Goals for the most part will represent partial achievement. They will be milestones on the way the church must go. They will represent what the church should accomplish this year, this decade. If they prove inadequate, they will be modified or discarded altogether. Their achievement will not mean contentment, but a challenge to move on. Goals not expressed in terms of the final product must be flexible and temporary and always in process of reconstruction.

Numerical goals.—Shall goals be set in terms of numbers? The advantages are obvious whenever this is possible. Numbers are specific, easily seen and make attainment easy to check. But on the other hand, numbers so readily lend themselves to the promotion of fictitious values. They make easy the shift from vital processes to census taking. Some seem to think the high calling of the church is to count "noses." Its great function is turned into the doing of activities that can be easily tabulated.

Obviously, some goals will be set in numerical terms. The minister's salary will be definitely fixed by contract. He no longer is paid by loose offerings and periodic donations. The salaries of the janitor and others employed by the church will be specifically stated. Light, heat, telephone, and other items of expense may be estimated in terms of numbers. These, by their very nature, must be definitely stated.

However, to set numerical goals in some lines is but to encourage adding-machine activities. Gross offenses have been committed at this point, particularly in evangelistic and Sunday school work. Telegrams reporting the numerical results of meetings pour into the offices of the religious press and offer elequent testimony to the modern worship of numbers. Evangelistic results are almost altogether reported in numerical terms. The Sunday school of the past has been and many of the present day are offenders at this point. If ever an institution put its dependence upon numbers, the Sunday school of a few years ago did. Many of them spent their time largely in recruiting. Superintendents were made campaign managers and teachers their lieutenants.

But that which finally counts is the transformation that takes place in human lives. Personality must be recentered, or more firmly centered, in Christ. God must become real through Christlike living. The joy of human service must be known. The life of love must be tested. These are the ultimate outcomes, and any goal—or method of stating it—that prevents the attaining of these results is unworthy the church of Christ.

Goals in terms of processes.—The church, in many cases, will be on safer ground to set goals in terms of processes. Instead of setting a total of a certain number to be won to Christ or of a certain per cent of increase in church membership, let the goal be a pre-Easter campaign, a class in personal evangelism, or an emphasis upon evangelism through the regular teaching processes of the church. If Sunday school attendance is not what it should be, why simply set a goal in terms of numbers? Attendance involves many factors. Why not discover the causes of non-attendance and make goals in terms of whatever is needed to remove them? If attendance is down because of poor teaching, no fellowship, or dull sessions, set goals in terms of improved teaching, rich fellowship and interesting activities. Such goals would emphasize real, not fictitious, values.

Thus the church, filled with the sense of enterprise, will build its program. It will plan definitely and with thought of its full share of the task of world redemption. Its goals will be made flexible, and they will serve as challenging guideposts. Always it will seek to measure progress in terms of vital processes. Real values will be striven for. Nothing short of a Christian race of men will be the achievement sought.

FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. Compare as many statements of the function of the church as you can find. Note the statements by George A. Coe, *What is Christian Education?*, pp. 256-7 and Shailer Mathews, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, chap. viii.
2. How can church membership be made creative?
3. What is the difference between specific and general objectives?
4. Define the working relations that should exist between the church and such institutions as the Christian associations, the Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, etc.
5. The possibilities for creating a taste for good literature through the public library.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Experiments in Personal Religion, study v, The American Institute of Sacred Literature.
Munro, Harry C.: How to Increase your Sunday School, The Bethany Press.
Bower, W. C.: Religious Education in the Modern Church, chap. ii, The Bethany Press.
Vieth, Paul H.: Teaching for Christian Living, chap. ii, The Bethany Press; Objectives in Religious Education, Harper and Brothers.
Mathews, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chap. viii, Macmillan.
Calkins, Raymond: The Christian Church in the Modern World, chap. iv, Macmillan.
Coe, George A.: What is Christian Education? Scribners.
Fortune, A. W.: The Church of the Future, chap. iii, The Bethany Press.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

SCRIPTURES

ACTS 2:42.—And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship. . . .

ACTS 4:32.—And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul. . . .

JOHN 4:23, 24.—But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How would you define evangelism?
2. What is an ''educational'' church?
3. What is the function of the sermon?
4. What would you do to develop fellowship in the church?
5. Give your own definition of worship.
6. What is the place of ritual in worship?

A review of the previous chapters will show that the essential elements in the teaching of Jesus have been indicated. It has been pointed out that the message of Jesus is the message of the Christian religion. The bare outlines of the program of the followers of Christ have been drawn. The historical development of the Christian movement has been sketched. The technique for more effective Christian living and a method for building a program for the local church have been suggested. The remainder of this discussion will deal with an elaboration of the message of Jesus to specific areas of human living, and it will be concerned with the local church as such a group develops its program and seeks to do its share of the great task of building a new world.

The local church is made the starting point because it is the fundamental unit of organized Christianity. It is where most Christians serve. It is the basal point of the Christian movement. From it come the resources of leadership and money that extend the borders of the Kingdom. If the local church does not succeed, all else fails.

The strategic position of the local church, then, demands that its own life be full and rich. It must not be an isolated unit. It must help every member to live the abundant life. It must link him vitally and consciously to the ongoing processes of the Kingdom. Help and opportunity must be afforded every member for the expression of his life to the ends of the earth.

Now, what must the local church do to make its life minister to this end? What elements must its program contain?

As already noted, Jesus did not discuss the local church. Nowhere do the records state that he gave direction for the life of the local groups. The items of their programs were not specified. His followers were free to work out their own group life. The life of good will must be lived. And that kind of living must be made known to others. The will of a loving Father must be wrought in and through the local church.

EVANGELISM

Many devout persons say evangelism is the first, the chief, and the only work of the church. Others equally devoted to the cause of Christ affirm that it is but part of the task. A few Christian leaders declare that they are not evangelistic, that they are interested in other ways of doing the work of the church. Some have thought there were contradictions between religious education and evangelism, and have even gone so far as to set forth the points of apparent conflict. Denials of these contentions have been numerous and emphatic. Thus, when one begins to review the existing attitudes toward evangelism, one finds them to be varied and at times contradictory.

Such confusion calls for clarification. If the work of the church is to be made effective, the function of the Christian group must be clearly understood.

Definition of evangelism.—What is evangelism? A satisfactory definition is not easy to give. But if a church, or a Christian, is to be evangelistic, there must be some clear-cut notion of what evangelism is. Therefore, the following definition is offered. Evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel, the "good news," with the intent of its being accepted.

The follower of Jesus has a message to proclaim. The Christian life does not mean that one has something he may keep to himself. It means rather that the joy and significance of a life in Christ must be made known. Life is made meaningful and good only as it is shared. If human living is ennobled and enriched as it takes on the attitudes and spirit of Jesus, then the obligation exists to make the Master's way known to others. The process of making Jesus known to others is evangelism. Evangelism is, indeed, sharing Christ with others.

The broad meaning of evangelism.—The full meaning of the ''good news'' must be made known as it is proclaimed, else it will not be good news. None of its implications should be slighted. The gospel deals with all of life, and any telling of the ''story'' should tell it all.

Many insist that evangelism is not only the proclamation of the gospel to those who have never accepted it, but it is also the continuous urging to Christlike living of those who have already made confession of their faith in Jesus. Sunday school teachers who make clear the meaning of Jesus to our modern life are said to be evangelists. The minister, whether urging someone to make his initial confession of faith in Christ or pleading for a deeper consecration on the part of those who are followers of Jesus, is doing the work of an evangelist. So construed, evangelism is the supreme end of all the efforts of disciples of Jesus. It is the all-inclusive task of the church.

The proclamation of the gospel, to be evangelism, must be made with the intent of its being accepted. An academic lecture which merely explains the gospel is not evangelism. The presentation of the gospel must be fired by the earnestness and passion of the proclaimer to have it accepted to make it evangelism.

Methods of evangelism.—The confused thinking concerning evangelism, indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, is due largely to the identification of methods of evangelism with evangelism itself. The professional evangelist has been made so prominent in many religious bodies that in certain quarters he has been regarded as the only one who is ''evangelizing.'' The minister has stressed ''seasons'' of evangelism. The result has been that certain methods—usually special meetings—have come to be regarded as evangelism.

If the definition of evangelism offered above even approximates the truth, then evangelism may be done by many methods. The regular preaching of the minister is evangelism. It is the proclamation of the gospel. At times he will stress the acceptance of Jesus by those who have never acknowledged him. But always he will be setting forth the gospel in some of its many phases. There will be times when emphasis upon a committal to Christ will be made in special meetings. The minister may conduct these. He may call in another pastor or he may make use of a ''professional'' evangelist. The leaders of the church may be brought together in a class to study ''personal'' evangelism and may later be sent out two by two. Fortunately, evangelism has many methods. Paul recognized this when he mentioned the offices of the Christian group. There were apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers, but all were to work to one end, the ''building up of the body of Christ,'' ''the attainment of the knowledge of the son of God,'' and the ''measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.''[1]

The identification of evangelism with one or more of its methods is extremely unfortunate. It brands

[1] Ephesians 4:11-13.

those who use other means as unevangelistic. It is unjust to other methods and to those who work with them. It is to the glory of the Lord that his cause does not depend upon one way of working, but may be carried forward by many methods. And these methods may change, but the proclamation of the eternal gospel goes on the same.

The program of evangelism.—In building its program, a church must determine the methods it will use. This is essential if any degree of success is to be attained.

First of all, the previous experience of the persons concerned should be considered. Formation is one process and re-formation is another. For the young not yet formally committed to Christ and the church, the appeal will be made one way; for the mature who have never been informed of the Master's life and way, a quite different appeal is necessary. Failure to recognize these differences in experience have led to many abuses in the past. Particularly have children who have been reared in Christian homes been sinned against. With the young it is a committal; with the mature and the sinful it is a repentance as well as a commitment. Any plan the church may make should be modified according to the appeal to be made.

In the second place, the church will decide whether to depend upon regular processes or upon special efforts. Will evangelism be continuous or will it be confined to spasmodic efforts? In the end, the church that makes its evangelistic appeals through its regular work will be more successful than the one that depends upon periodic emphases. But the church will need to decide which of these methods will be employed or what combination of the two will be used.

The entire church, in the third place, should be enlisted in the work of evangelism in so far as it is possible. Certainly the leadership will need to have impressed upon them the necessity for evangelistic appeal and in the making of the plans for this work they should share. Evangelism, in its broad meaning, is the work of the whole church, and the program should be developed accordingly. There is a joy in witnessing for Christ and it should be restricted to no group. The evangelistic program of the church should include classes in evangelistic methods and practice in visitation.

In the last place, the church should recognize the differences among the various methods available and determine which ones will be used. The regular preaching—if it fulfills the function of preaching—will be evangelistic in that it proclaims the good life in Jesus. The number of special meetings, if any, will be decided upon. Decision Days and how to observe them will be taken into account. Will the church have a "revival"? If so, will the pastor do the preaching or will an "evangelist" be called in? Will there be seasons of evangelistic emphasis? All these questions will be answered one way or another in the course of developing a program for the church.

The church that depends upon regular processes for its evangelism will make much of its teachers. Everyone will be counted an evangelist. Adult classes will attract many. The adolescent departments will work for decisions for Christian living.

Children will be carefully nurtured in the life of good will. The Nursery departments will reach many parents through babies. Teachers will be meeting in many conferences to consider the conservation of evangelistic results.

A final word may be said. The most effective appeal will be a happy, wholesome church life. Advertising that emphasizes fictitious values or values not found in the life of the church should be avoided. In the end, the life of the group will determine who and how many will continue in the Christian way. Any appeal by word of mouth or printed page that does not represent the actual life of the Christian group should never be made and in the end is doomed to failure.

The Educational Method

There is a growing conviction that religious education is not something apart from other processes of church life. It is not something to be confined to a ''school'' or a ''department.'' It is rather the process by which the church carries on its work.

What is an educational church?—An educational church is one whose life, fellowship, activities, everything, is in keeping with the learning process. In other words, where learning occurs, there you have an educational church. What is learned may be desirable or it may not be. But where learning goes on education is taking place and that church may be called educational.

Most of church life is educational. It is false to say that education occurs only in the Sunday school.

Preaching, worship, the work of the young people's society are all educational. Fellowship, the manner of conducting the business of the church, the orderliness of the services, the enthusiasm of the leaders, and many other features change and direct human living and are therefore educational. Everything within the life of the church which changes living is educational and should be so regarded.

A great deal of unwholesome learning takes place within the church. An appreciation of jazz songs, inefficient methods of church administration, antiquated techniques have all been learned in many churches. Antagonistic attitudes toward the Christian religion have been developed by the inconsistent living of certain church leaders. Such learnings, though not intended, do take place and but emphasize the fact that church life is educational.

The advantages of regarding the total life of the church as educational are obvious. It means the items of the church program will be selected because of their educational value and they will be carried on as educational procedures. Every activity, every method, every mood will be evaluated according to its educational possibilities. Organizations will be judged by their contributions to the educative process. The recreation and social life of the church will not be considered side issues, but a part of the total procedure. The method by which the church raises its budget will be seen to be educational, for someone will be learning the right way or the wrong way of church finance. Manifestly, the educational ideal furnishes a truly unifying principle. Around it, the church may shape its organizations, its program, and its life. The result will be a minimum of friction and effort and a maximum of desirable outcomes.

How make a church educational?—But how can a church be made educational? First, there must be a clear conception on the part of the church members as to what an educational church is. Such a church is one that measures every activity of its life by the standard of how well that activity helps persons to live the Christian life. The educational church does not busy itself merely with "getting things done." It is not content solely to promote campaigns. It seeks to do that totality of activities needed to secure the fullest religious development. Its organizations, its programs, its activities are chosen with that end in view. Everything from sermons to the ventilation of the building, from teaching classes to oyster suppers must be directed toward this objective. Such a church is educational.

Manifestly, the minister must direct his leadership to the development of an educational church. By virtue of his position as the professional leader of the local group, he must lead in making the church educational, if that result is to be obtained. Some of the larger churches will employ ministers of education who will direct certain features of the church's life, but an educational church in the sense described above cannot be achieved until all the ministers the church may employ see this ideal and unite in working for it.

The minister of the church must be educationally prepared if such a church is to be realized. The young man entering upon a ministerial career today should not consider his preparation complete unless he has made a study of the ideals and techniques of religious education. For whether he is prepared to do it or not, he is going to be called upon to lead an educational enterprise. If his preparation should include a study of sermonizing, of preaching, of biblical criticism, it should also include a study of educational processes. And until the minister does understand the educational ideal and prepares himself to lead in its realization, the local church will continue to be split into many organizations and its activities constitute a mosaic of programs, often conflicting and competing. An educational ministry is a prime need in the present day.

Expanding the program.—The educational church will examine its life to see that needs are fully met and will expand its program accordingly. The children and youth of the church must be cared for. The adults must have adequate educational provision. And beyond the constituency of the church in nearly every community are scores of children, young people, and adults who are touched by no church. A plan to reach these should be part of the program of every educational church.

The church must be ready to modify its schedule to meet the needs of its constituency. In certain sections, ten A.M. as the hour for opening the church school has almost a divine sanction. It always has been done that way and why should it be done differently? But when a community's habits of living change, schedules must be modified. The institution was made for man. Many churches are now experimenting with revised schedules in order to serve their entire constituency. Sessions of various departments are being extended. Week day classes for children and adults are being held. And the church that desires to serve every member of its constituency will examine its schedule and make whatever changes are needed.

PREACHING

Many criticisms against Protestantism have been made recently for its historic exaltation of the sermon. What is needed is better music, a more elaborate ritual, more education, and less preaching—so these critics say. And some have declared that when religious education becomes effective throughout the church the need for the sermon will have passed. Fewer and shorter sermons! That has been cried so frequently until in certain churches the morning sermon has shrunk to a sermonette and the evening sermon has disappeared.

But preaching will not be displaced so easily. It has occupied too honored a position to go. Its function is too vital. In the future, fewer sermons may be preached and less time given to them, but preaching will be none the less prominent. Christianity is an ethical religion and as such has a large place for the prophet. The sermon will stay. And despite the development of music in the church, the elaboration of ritual, and the perfecting of educational processes, preaching will still be needed.

The function of preaching.—What, then, is the function of preaching? If, notwithstanding the development of the other elements of church life, preaching will still have a vital place, what is that place?

The function of preaching is to interpret life in terms of religious living and to persuade men to live accordingly. The Christian preacher is of course concerned with the way of life taught by Jesus. The starting point in the sermon is life itself. The theme is living, living according to the Christian way. The sermon is not a dissertation on economics, on sociology, or on history. It is rather an interpretation of our economic and social order and of events in terms of the Christian ideal. It is an interpretation, too, of the human heart. The preacher must know life. He must be in the midst of its struggles and yet be sufficiently objective to see its implications and detect the direction of its movements.

A sermon is not the exposition of a book. This does not mean that the Bible has no place in preaching, or that it is of less consequence than formerly. It does mean, however, that it will be used in a different way, a more effective way. The Bible will be seen to be a record of vital religious experiences that may be used to guide and stimulate right living today. Its worth has always consisted in its contribution to present-day problems.

The function of preaching, as has been indicated, is more than the mere interpretation of life. Its function is to quicken the conscience and to secure immediate and enduring decisions to live more righteously. Preaching urges the renewal of the struggle for noble living. It makes men anxious to help make life worth living. It re-enforces sagging morals. It gives men a desire to follow the Christian way. The test of good preaching is at this point. How many are stirred to nobler living, are made to feel the need for moral struggle, are made willing to sacrifice for the Christian cause, are helped to know God?

Preaching has for its function, too, the kindling of the imagination and the arousing of the emotions. This does not mean that because appeal is made to the imagination that facts will be slighted or that they will be "glorified." The deeper meanings of life must be apprehended. Not until humanity can imagine a social order dominated by love, a warless world, a Kingdom of God on earth, can these ever come. And preaching must emotionalize the group. Emotions furnish energy. They must not be aroused for their own sakes, but for power to realize the Christian ideal in human living.

Finally, preaching must be regarded as a part of the total educative process of the church. It is not the sermon *or* religious education. Preaching stands in its own right. An ethical religion needs the sermon. Preaching must be a stimulating, energizing, emotionalizing, interpretative process at work in the midst of the ongoing life of the church. The minister must be an expert in these matters. As preacher, he is an educator and is responsible for carrying on an important phase of the educative process.

Fellowship

Essential to successful congregational life is fellowship. Without it, the church languishes. It is safe to say the execution of worth-while programs depends upon fellowship. Teaching moves upon a base of friendship. Morale exists only where there is fellowship. The jars that inevitably come in group life often assume dangerous proportions, but how hard it is for discords to become serious when there is rich fellowship. Fellowship is essential to wholesome, successful group life.

Fellowship educates.—Fellowship educates in feelings and appreciations. It is not reducible to platitudes. ''Thou shalt love'' dinned in one's ears is not half so effective a teacher of love as to be caught up in a great fellowship of good will. And without fellowship, the church cannot teach the principle of love. When churches quarrel, it is more tragic than many suppose. They thereby rob themselves of all power to teach the very principle for which the church stands. They deny the reason for their existence.

Aside from its educational value, fellowship makes church life happy and thereby constitutes a great appeal. In fact, fellowship is for some the greatest appeal. It meets something fundamental in human needs. Man requires the association of his kind. Through fellowship he is stimulated to do his best, he is encouraged in his failures, and finds joy in the praise of his fellows when he succeeds. And the church has that which makes possible the richest fellowship. An unselfish cause, a spirit of helpfulness, a desire to know and do the will of God furnish the basis for the highest fellowship which the human race may experience. To fail in fellowship is failure for the church at a vulnerable point.

A program of fellowship.—But if fellowship of this sort is to be had, the program of the church must provide for it. Generally, it will not come without some planning. In this day fellowship tends to center around specialized interests. The church is no longer a social center for the community. It must make its fellowship inviting.

The enterprises of the church furnish the best basis for fellowship. A common cause makes for fraternity. Therefore, the church should have activities that enlist all. Mere attendance upon a service will not suffice. Many luncheon clubs have found that coming together just to eat does not afford sufficient motive for attendance. Only as the church finds fellowship in service will satisfaction come. Many have found such fellowship in supporting a missionary or in helping a weaker church. Young people have found it in rehearsals for pageants or in activities of service.

Fellowship in the activities of the church is unifying in its effect. The efforts of departmentalized churches to find unification by an assembly of old and young are not very effective. Bringing a group of all ages into a room at the same time will not unify them. Far better give each a proportionate share in some common enterprise. Let each group see that it has a part in the total endeavor. Make the shared activities the unifying center and a general assembly, if held, will be of greater worth.

Some social activities, centering in the church, should be fostered by every congregation. There are values to be found in recreation. Ideals are taught, standards of amusement are lifted, and loyalties are developed. Age groups should meet from time to time. Recreation suitable for old and young together may some day be developed. The great festivals and special days of the church may afford occasions for rich fellowship.

But in addition to furnishing fellowship within the church, it should be promoted without. Visitation must not be neglected. The minister will do his share, but only his share. The membership should be organized to call. Newcomers, the sick, the aged, the shut-ins, the lonely, should receive especial attention. Visits on behalf of the church should be numerous. Fellowship through visitation should be constantly encouraged.

Worship

But association with one another does not exhaust man's need for fellowship. He must have fellowship with God. And the congregation that seeks, as a group, to do a share of the total Christian task must worship as a group. The richest experiences of worship may center in the aspirations, the successes, and the disappointments of the congregation as it tries to meet its obligation in the total Christian enterprise.

What is worship? To attempt to define it with exactness would involve one in useless debate. But is it not fellowship with God? When one consciously reaches out to the One "in whom we live and move and have our being," he worships.

The function of worship.—When one carefully analyzes his experiences of worship and discovers what takes place, he becomes convinced of the importance of worship in Christian living. In worship, one becomes conscious of the reality of God. Doubts are dissolved, moral purposes, battered and weakened by the defeats of life, are renewed. Sins committed are seen in their heinousness and repentance and regeneration follow. Broken ideals are rebuilt and new ones constructed through fresh insights. Problems are solved and new levels of living attained. But worship is not concerned only with reconstruction. When one feels the wonder and awe and mystery of the universe, the grandeur and beauty and magnificance of this world, he finds himself going out to the author and maker of it all. These processes are at work in acts of worship.

Thus, when one sees what worship is, he knows it to be supremely important. There is no higher act than that of putting oneself in tune with the Infinite, of reconstructing and renewing one's life around the will of God. Worship is the supreme act of the Christian and the church must encourage it.

Nor is private worship sufficient. An element is added when worship takes place in the group. One becomes conscious of others interested in the great Christian enterprise and of the fact that they, too, are struggling with the problems of life. This constitutes a re-enforcement that makes worship, as a member of a group, doubly rich. And if the worshiper knows the history of the church, he may through his worship join not only with the immediate group of which he is a member, but with the saints and martyrs who have made the Christian's heritage.

The church, then, must recognize the fundamental place of worship in Christian living and make ample provision for it. Too long has this element in church life been neglected. The reconstructing and expansive force of worship must be allowed to make its contribution to the Christian group.

The program of worship.—When the local church plans its program of worship, it will give consideration to the house in which it meets. Not that this is first in importance, but it is essential. There should be at least one room for worship. In most places, other functions will have to be carried on, but let the room be constructed for worship. Beautify it and let Christian symbols give their silent messages. Make it the holy of holies of congregational life. There let men find the Presence.

Attention should be given to the ritual of the services. The richest hymns, the choicest portions of Scripture, the most impressive forms will be sought. Everything will be done to make worship more significant.

There is a turning away today from the barren meetinghouses and equally barren rituals that have characterized so much of American Protestantism. But too much of this turning away is not toward the creation of new types of architecture and new forms of ritual. It is turning to copy the architecture and rituals of the more formal churches. And therein lurks a danger. Ritual always tends to become mere form. Beauty entrances but does not always lead to God. For many a person has been lost in the cold formalism of ritualism and has stood enraptured by the beauties of architecture and art and yet has not heard in it all the voice of God. Flexible forms and simple, beautiful architecture must be devised as an aid to the worship of the group, but supreme dependence must not be put upon them.

Group worship to become truly significant must grow up out of the life of the group. It will be most effective when the sense of enterprise is strong. Out of the give and take of congregational life and its defeats and successes, men will find God in worship. Here will occur that reconstruction of life which makes worship so vital. In the development of techniques for this sort of worship, the greatest achievements in the future are likely to be made.

The children and adult worship.—Shall the children be brought into the adult worship? This is a question experience has not yet answered. Whether a worship service can be conducted in which adults, youth and children equally participate is questionable. But where children must be, or are, brought into the adult service, the universals of worship should be used. The service, including the sermon, must be brief. And the children should be definitely enlisted in the service. If they are not, there will be no worship for them.

A part of the program of worship should be the training of the young in worship. If the church emphasizes it, youth will learn its importance. The materials of worship should be made familiar to them. They will need to master the techniques for planning and directing group worship. A worshiping church tomorrow depends upon the training of the young in worship today.

And private worship, it must be remembered, is necessary to effective group worship. For worship after all is an individual act. Group worship is not something apart from the worship of persons who comprise the group. It is the common outgoing of the group to God. And persons who do not worship alone will not be likely to worship in the group.

It follows, then, that the church's program of worship should include measures for stimulating private worship. This does not mean that the church must have a Bible reading contest or promote a quiet hour or morning watch. Many, of course, will benefit by such observances. It does mean that individuals will be constantly stimulated to achieve the highest of human attainments, the self-initiated outreach of the human heart that finds itself in God.

Needless to say, the worship of the group will be regarded as a phase of the educational process which includes the total life of the church. Its place will be acknowledged and its importance in the whole procedure realized. Not something apart will it be considered, but of the very fabric of the life of the church.

How much more meaningful will church life be when it is no longer regarded as a series of unrelated meetings, but as a broad process of education—when evangelism, ''religious education,'' preaching, fellowship and worship are seen as aspects of one great process to lift men to the high trail blazed by the Man of Galilee.

For Further Investigation

1. How to enlist all the leaders of the local church in evangelism.
2. Make a list of cases where fellowship has been educative. Worship.
3. How to begin making a church educational.
4. What modifications, if any, would you make in the

schedule of your church to insure an adequate ministry to the needs of its constituency?

5. What changes, if any, should be made in the worship room of your church to make it more conducive to worship?

6. What themes should be dealt with in the sermon?

Bibliography

Goodell, Charles L.: Master Motives and Methods in Evangelism, Revell.

Gage, Albert H.: Evangelism of Youth, The Judson Press.

Bower, W. C.: Religious Education in the Modern Church, The Bethany Press.

Munro, H. C.: The Church as a School, The Bethany Press.

Fiske, George Walter: Purpose in Teaching Religion, The Abingdon Press.

Cope, H. F.: Religious Education in the Church, Scribners.

Coffin, H. S.: What to Preach, Doran.

Newton, Joseph Fort: The New Preaching, Cokesbury.

Brunner, Edmund de S.: Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches, chap. vii, Doran.

Sperry, Willard L.: Reality in Worship, Macmillan.

Voght, Von Ogden: Modern Worship, Yale University Press.

Beaven, A. W.: Putting the Church on a Full Time Basis, chap. xvi, Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Soares, Theodore G.: Religious Education, chap. vi, The University of Chicago Press.

CHAPTER VII

THE FAMILY AND THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH

SCRIPTURES

MARK 10:6-9.—But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

LUKE 10:38.—Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Is wholesome family life essential to successful church life? Why?
2. What are the effects of modern economic conditions upon the family?
3. What items would you include in a church program for the betterment of family life?
4. What are the effects of modern life upon the unity of the family?
5. Why was Jesus more specific with respect to the family than with some of the other institutions of his day?
6. Is divorce ever justifiable? If so, when?

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY

The family occupies a fundamental place in human society. The very destiny of the race is linked to family life. The facts that called it into being still exist. Its function remains. The well-being of the family is essential to progress in human living.

A biological unit.—The family is important because it is a biological unit. Both sexes must contribute to any new life. The long period of infancy which characterizes human beings necessitates the parents' living together. The young must have the nurture and care of both father and mother to attain maximum development. The successful ongoing of the race depends upon the maintenance of the family unit.

Personal values emphasized.—The family has an importance because inherently it emphasizes personal values. In it persons are of worth because of themselves. The affections of family life give its members a worth that is personal. Persons are not valued as they are in industry. There a man is rated according to the amount of work he can do or the quantity of goods he can sell. Let him cease to have economic value and industry has little use for him. But in the family it is different. Relations are hallowed by affection. The child, even though an economic liability, has the sacrificial care of parents. A member of the family may sin and even become an outcast of society and sought by the law and yet not be repudiated by his own household. The family is the great preserver of personal values and as such has an unusual importance in society. Of course this is not true of every family, but it is so where affection exists.

An educational agency.—The family is universally recognized as an educational agency. It is the most important educational institution in society. The fundamental attitudes toward life are developed largely within the family circle. Every revelation by present-day students of the importance of the learning of the pre-school child but further emphasizes the fundamental place of the family as an educational agency. Co-operation, recognition of the worth of individuals, and the give-and-take of life are learned best within the family. In educational possibilities, the family ranks first.

The family is important from the standpoint of the church. From divided or broken families do not come, as a rule, those who can give the most unstinted service to the church. Regardless of the purposes of the individual, his participation in church life will usually be restricted by the attitudes of other members of the family when they are without sympathy for or are antagonistic to the work of the church. And, too, the Christian message will find a fuller fruition in homes where the entire membership of the family is sympathetic to the Christ ideal. The unity and success of family living have a direct relation to the welfare of the church. In the family the Christian attitude can probably be more easily produced than in any other institution save the church.

THE FAMILY TODAY

The church as it faces its task in the world today must take the family as it is. And the family is in process of change and confronts a world that is no two days alike.

Economic changes.—The effects of recent economic changes upon family life have been revolutionary. The story of how industry has moved the family to the city and housed it in tenement, apartment, and flat has been many times told. It is well known how work once done in home or near-by shop is now performed in the factory thirty minutes away. The entrance of woman into industry, a phenomenon of our day, is too important to be overlooked. The total effect has been a modification of the routine of family life and an increasing of the difficulty of maintaining family unity.

Community changes.—The community in which the family lives has likewise changed. Communities are no longer clusters of people; they are groups of organizations. These organizations represent every interest of humanity. They claim time and energy from all but the youngest members of the family. Much of the recreation is commercialized. The smallest town has its movie. An automobile will separate the members of the family many miles within an hour's time. These conditions, which prevail in practically every community, are significant in their results. Each member of the family has his own interest. Each goes his own way. The togetherness so essential to family unity gives way to apartness. Disintegration follows.

Invasion of the home.—Not only are members of the family finding many interests outside the home, but the home itself is being invaded. Agencies that consciously or unconsciously teach ideals are reaching every fireside. The daily newspaper goes everywhere. The radio is in most homes. A turn of the dial and a cabaret orchestra joins the family circle. In this day a home is not only in the world, but it is a part of it. A family cannot escape these influences except by a policy of exclusiveness so drastic as to deny all human fellowship.

Authoritarianism gone.—The passing of authoritarianism is affecting family life. The modern father is no patriarch. The present-day mother is likely to have a mind of her own. The children have liberties which shock their grandparents. The old forms of control are going. Family unity is giving way to individualism. The techniques of democratic family life await development. A frequent result is chaos, anarchy.

Experimental marriage.—Another element in the situation today is the teaching of a philosophy of marriage that puts marital relationships upon a temporary and experimental basis. This has been made doubly serious by the widespread publicity given to it. A series of magazine articles, a book, newspaper exploitation of couples married on the companionate basis, vaudeville exhibition of such persons, and the doctrine of companionate marriage becomes the universal subject of a nation's conversation. Free love and promiscuity have had their advocates and their advertisements. This teaching puts marriage upon a physical plane and tends to destroy the idea of permanency in the marriage relation.

Divorce easy.—The shame of our civilization is the ease and frequency with which divorce is granted. Divorces in some centers are almost as numerous as marriages. A divorce is more serious than the breaking of the ordinary civil contract. It is a severing of the most intimate relationships entered into by humankind. And wherever there are children, they constitute the chief sufferers. Juvenile delinquents, dependent children, heartaches, and a cheapening of all life follow in the trail of divorce.

The foregoing paragraphs describe in part the problem of the family in our civilization. Two questions now arise: What does Jesus have to say to the modern family? How should the program of the church take the present situation into account?

JESUS' TEACHING ON THE FAMILY

Jesus had a great deal to say about the family. He was probably more specific in his treatment of this institution than he was in his consideration of any other.

The high place the family held in the thinking of Jesus is shown by his use of it to illustrate the Kingdom.[1] The Kingdom of God was Jesus' concept of perfect relationships. God was a loving Father, men were brothers and possible sons of God. These relationships of the Kingdom he set forth in terms of the human family.

Jesus' attitude toward his own family and the families he met indicate his respect for the institution. While he never married, he was not an ascetic. He was found frequently in homes.[2] Jesus himself was a member of a family and recognized his obligation even to the close of his earthly ministry.[3] Always his attitude toward the home was one of respect.

Marriage ordained of God.—Marriage, Jesus taught, was ordained of God. "What therefore God hath joined together"[4] was the way he expressed it.

---

[1] Matthew 12:46-50; 23:9; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21. [2] Luke 10:38-42; 14:1; 19:1-9; John 12:1, 2. [3] John 19:26, 27. [4] Matthew 19:6.

By a creative act of the Father, members of the human race were made male and female. Their union in marriage was a part of his purposes for men. Marriage, therefore, is more than a civil contract; it is a union which has its origin in the plan of God.

With Jesus, marriage was an actual union of personalities. It was a uniting of one man and one woman. Monogamy was the unquestioned form. On the physical side, marriage was a union such as to form one flesh. They ''are no more two but one flesh,''[5] he said. The inference may be drawn that Jesus did not regard marriage merely as a physical union. It was moral as well. If the man and woman are to put their marital relations above the ties that bind them to their own parents,[6] the union must be more than physical. It is hallowed by love. Thus, according to Jesus, marriage unites two human beings so that they are no longer just two persons but a new unity, joined in flesh and in moral purpose.

Jesus never intimates that marriage is sinful. Sex is not sin. It is normal. Morbidity concerning sex and efforts to stifle completely sex impulses do not come from Jesus' teaching. In normal circumstances family life is the natural order. Marriage is wholesome and within the scheme of things as planned by God. It is not merely the making of sex relations legitimate; it is a joining of the life purposes and destinies of two persons.

Marriage, a permanent union.—To Jesus, marriage was a permanent union. Being ordained of God, it could not be broken by man. Divorce was not for

[5] Mark 10:8. [6] Mark 10:7.

those who live by love.[7] He admitted that Moses for a special reason had permitted divorce. But he went back of Moses; "from the beginning it hath not been so."[8] It was not within the purposes of God. The nature of love would not permit it. The exceptive clause found in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is considered by some scholars to be an addition to the text.[9] But whatever the outcome of the discussion about this clause, Jesus undoubtedly taught that, in the Kingdom of God where personal values are first and where love prevails, the marriage tie is permanent and divorce has no place. The breaking of the marriage bond is impossible for those who make love the law of life.

While marriage was regarded by Jesus as normal, yet the Kingdom, he indicated, may have prior claim to the family. Men may make themselves "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."[10] He himself did not marry. Here he is teaching what was ever at the heart of his message: "Seek ye first the Kingdom."

WHAT THE CHURCH CAN DO

The family, we have seen, is a fundamental institution. Jesus' teaching concerning it is definite and emphatic. It follows that the church, if it is to be the bearer of the message of Jesus, must include in its program something for the family.

Recognize importance of family.—The church should first of all recognize the importance of the family. It may accept the judgment of the sociologist and educator in proclaiming the family the primary social unit and the most influential educational institution. The possibilities of the family for teaching the Christian way of life should also be appreciated by the church. By means of the sermon, the dissemination of literature, the conducting of special classes, and the attitude of teachers can the church proclaim its message on the family.

---

[7] Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18. [8] Matthew 19:8. [9] See Allen, Willoughby C., *St. Matthew*, International Critical Commentary, and Peabody, Francis G., *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*. [10] Matthew 19:12.

Assume definite attitudes.—Some definite attitudes toward the family should be assumed by the local congregation. The values of family life need to be upheld. Childhood and motherhood should be particularly safeguarded. The exploitation of children by industry or ignorant parents deserves condemnation. Mothers need help as they try to meet the obligations of their motherhood. The weaker members of the family, because of the values at stake, need the fostering care of the church.

The church should uphold the sanctity of the marriage relation and the ideal of its permanency. That the marriage contract is more than a civil one, should be the attitude of the church. To regard marriage as a civil contract is to pave the way for its easy dissolution. Companionate, trial, and other forms of marriage that regard it as a temporary arrangement should be condemned. Such marriages make impossible a unified and hence a Christian family. The intimate relations of family life cannot be maintained above the animal plane, to say nothing of attaining a unity of purpose, if marriage is but a temporary affair.

Attitude toward divorce.—What should be the attitude of the church toward divorce? This is no easy question to answer. Divorce undoubtedly will have to be tolerated in the social order for some time to come. Where all affection has ceased, separation is perhaps best. Mistakes no doubt are made in the choosing of a life's companion as in the making of other choices. Youth frequently marries in moments of infatuation. Society may need to permit the breaking of such bonds to prevent evils worse than divorce. But divorce, it should be remembered, is a desperate measure and should be used only as the last recourse.

The church should ever regard divorce as an evil. For such it is. The breaking of any marriage tie involves suffering. Where there are children, they bear more than an equal share in the consequent evils. These facts the church can make known.

The real nature of divorce the church should proclaim. It is a symptom, an effect. It is not a corrective. At best it is only a way out of an intolerable situation. The causes of which divorce is the expression lie deeper. To make divorce easy is not to eradicate the fundamental causes. The church should not be misled at this point. In fact, it should seek to correct the faulty thinking concerning this issue.

The church should make clear what a Christian family is. A family is Christian not because two Christian persons marry and live together. It is Christian when the function of the family is directed toward Christian ends. Family life must be made purposive with respect to the Christian way of living.

Perhaps it should be added that the Christian family does not stand for the way of love merely for its own members. It emphasizes personal values in all the areas of life. It is not a unit living unto itself, but lives in keeping with the welfare of all. Personal values outside the family circle are lived for as well as those within the home.

THE LOCAL CHURCH PROGRAM

Specifically, the local church can do many things to develop and sustain Christian families. The preacher, alert to his opportunities, will include the family in his sermonic considerations. There is now a wealth of literature bearing upon the family both as a sociological unit and a Christian institution. This literature can be made available to the membership. Classes for adults and young people can be conducted when suitable leadership can be obtained.

For youth.—The development of Christian families involves doing something for youth. It is then that most mating is done. Rational choices are needed here as in other important issues of life. The church, of course, will not choose for its young people, but guidance can and should be furnished.

A period of courtship precedes most marriages. This is prolonged by the postponement of marriage due to economic conditions and the long preparation required for certain professions. And courtship brings its problems.

Courtship is a modern phenomenon. Jesus, therefore, had nothing to say about it and consequently offers no specific teaching. His emphasis upon personal values and the sanctity of the marriage relation will apply here. This should furnish the basis for youth's ideal of courtship.

Informally, friendly teachers can help youth to high ideals of courtship. Formal classes, discussion groups, reading, and other opportunities for acquiring an understanding of the meaning of courtship and the family relationship may be offered. Experts in this field may be called in for lectures and conferences. Other means will be discovered when one seriously undertakes to meet the needs of youth at this point.

Wholesome social life for its young people should be furnished by the church. At the time they are choosing life companions, young people need the fellowship of Christian youth. They will choose their mates from the group with whom they associate. No greater service can be rendered than for the church to make possible happy, wholesome fellowship for young people of marriageable age. Of course, no church will be so foolish as to measure the success of its social program for youth by the number of engagements announced. It will think only of bringing together wholesome Christian young people at a time when mating is likely to occur.

Sex education.—It cannot be denied that youth needs a knowledge of sex. He should have an appreciation of all its implications. But whether the giving of such knowledge should be done by the church is another question. Ideally, parents should impart this information. Actually, many of them do not. But someone must give it, if youth is to be kept from numerous pitfalls. Whatever is undertaken by the church should be done by experts in sex education. The church cannot afford to bungle at this point.

Techniques of Christian family life.—The family needs "techniques" for making its life Christian. And all that some church leaders can offer to meet this need is the lament that the family is not what it used to be. Others cry for a restoration of the family altar. But if there is any place where new wine cannot be put into old bottles, it is the family. Families need to be told how to make their life Christian.

These techniques can be developed only experimentally. Numerous families should attempt to find effective ways of making the Christian attitude prevail in family life. Different methods should be tested. Only as wide experimentation is carried on will the best ways be discovered.

No one can forecast the final range of this experimentation. But for the present, a number of items may be suggested. The development of family enterprises in which every member may have a share is a prime need. Ways whereby the children may have a part in planning the family life and a share in its responsibilities are worth trying to find. Making religion a normal factor in every activity of the home will be another fruitful experiment. And perhaps one of the most significant will be to try to get from those influences and agencies which now seem to distract and disintegrate the family something that will enrich and unify. The automobile may be made to figure in many family enterprises. A way may be found to discard the bad and use the good in the newspaper. Perhaps the family can decide what shall and shall not be permitted to enter the family circle via the radio. Cannot the diverse interests of community groups to which the family belong be made to enrich all? Here are some fields in which experimentation for effective techniques may at present be profitably made.

A local congregation may well enlist a number of families in this experimentation. They could meet from time to time to report results and share experiences. These meetings would stimulate a greater interest in the home as well as furnish mutual help. And unless something of this sort is done, the techniques of finer family life will not be discovered.

Many families in a community will need pathological treatment. The average congregation cannot give direct help at this point. Where there are agencies in the community which can render such assistance, the church in most instances should work through them, perhaps limiting its efforts to a support of the programs of these welfare organizations.

A Crusade Needed

What is needed now is not a tirade against the modern home, but a crusade to discover the possibilities of present-day family life. Times have changed and family life has been modified. But noble impulses and the desire for right living endure. And as long as there persists a desire to make family life Christian, such living is possible of attainment. The program of every church should take into account the families that make up its life and the community in which it is situated. If the church neglects the home, it fails to sustain the institution upon whose success its own future largely depends.

For Further Investigation

1. The effect of divorce upon children as to dependency, juvenile delinquency, etc.

2. Can society live by Jesus' absolute ideal of no divorce?

3. Should the church ever give sex instruction? If so, when and how?

4. Outline a plan for satisfactory family worship.

5. Outline a program for preparing young people for the responsibilities of family life.

6. What may families do to unify family life?

Bibliography

Mathews, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chap. v, Macmillan.
Fiske, George Walter: The Changing Family, Harper and Brothers.
Darsie, Charles: The Christian Family, The Bethany Press.
Cope, H. F.: Religious Education in the Family, The University of Chicago Press.
Weigle, L. A.: The Training of Children in the Christian Family, The Pilgrim Press.
Fiske, George Walter: The Christian Family, The Abingdon Press.
The Parents' Magazine, The Parents' Publishing Association, Inc., New York City.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 25:40.—And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.

MATTHEW 23:23.—Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

MATTHEW 23:37.—O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Should the church keep out of politics? Why?
2. Should the church enlist in campaigns to fight Sunday movies, pool halls, or any concern that seems undesirable? Why?
3. What method should the church use in ministering to the poor, the delinquent, and the underprivileged?
4. What principles should govern in the building of a program of recreation for the church?
5. What can the church do to help turn leisure time to constructive uses?

No man lives unto himself; neither does a church. A church is very much in the world. It is a part of it. It cannot escape the influences of its social background. Its life is invariably modified by the life about it, for its members mingle with the groups that make up the community.

The church cannot ignore the world even though it should desire to do so. The teaching of Jesus forbids it. The social nature of the gospel will not permit it. The church has a message and a mission. It must not be silent and inactive. It dare not neglect the community at its very door.

What did Jesus have to say about the local community? How should the church take it into account when a program is built?

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT

When one faces the modern local community, urban or rural, and notes its complex life and varying needs, he finds much for which Jesus gave no specific utterance. The regulation of a neighbor's radio, the disposal of garbage, the building of fireproof dwellings, and scores of other neighborhood problems the average individual is constantly encountering can be solved only by Jesus' general teaching of brotherhood and good will.

Jesus gave no political philosophy and consequently speaks only indirectly to the modern problem of municipal government. Jesus did not question the forms of government then existing. He discussed no model that should be followed in the governance of national groups. When pressed by the representatives of the scribes and Pharisees to voice an opinion on the government of Caesar, he refused. Taking a coin and referring to the superscription of Caesar upon it, he said: ''Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.'' But he gave no indication of what he considered the things of Caesar to consist. Render ''unto God the things that are God's,''[1] was his chief emphasis. He came not to give a political philosophy, nor to outline a model government, nor to codify the duties of citizens. He came to make men loyal to a loving Father. Forms of government were left to man's devising. Jesus seemed to take the attitude that the life of love or good will was supreme and that the formulating of forms for its expression could be trusted to man.

Jesus outlined no program of social amelioration. But the imperative for a program of social helpfulness he gave in his own attitudes. Jesus' ministry is characterized as not only teaching and preaching, but healing.[2] Many felt the beneficent touch of his hand.[3] Even help given the needy was regarded as a personal service to him.[4] Jesus' emphasis upon the worth of man applies here. His kindly attitude toward the weak, the outcast, the children, the women, the sick, the sinner is precedent and command enough for the church to manifest a similar attitude. The will of God as he understood it was that none of these little ones should perish.[5]

The modern local community faces an acute problem in its amusements and recreation or lack of them. Search the gospels and it is difficult to find any statement of Jesus that even remotely bears upon this problem. We can only infer that since Jesus was so wholesome, so fond of the out-of-doors, so abounding in health, so companionable, he must approve wholesome recreation. No doubt Jesus' valuation of men must govern here. Any program of recreation and amusement for a community, so far as the church is concerned, must be tested by the contribution it makes to the enrichment of human living.

---

[1] Luke 20:19-26. [2] Matthew 4:23. [3] Luke 4:40 and others. [4] Matthew 25:40. [5] Matthew 18:14.

So in general, one may say, the program of the local church for the community must be developed in keeping with Jesus' general attitude. His fundamental emphasis upon love, the worth of man, and the primary place of the Kingdom must guide. Thus interpreted, Jesus speaks emphatically to local community life.

Civic Life

Political forms.—Every local community is politically organized. As has been noted, Jesus offers no guidance as to what its form shall be. That is left to the wisdom of man. And the church may well leave that question to the students of government and the citizenship of the nation. Its concern will be to have instituted the best government the mind of man can devise. However, at this point it should be noted that Jesus' emphasis upon the worth of the individual has had its effect upon governmental forms. The passing of autocratic governments and the inauguration of democratic processes have been the inevitable results of Jesus' teaching. Any exaltation of the worth of man undermines autocracy and strengthens democracy. The church of course is interested in the working out of democratic processes, and her concern is to have established those forms which will enhance human values. This is her only care.

The church in politics.—"The church should not mix in business and politics; its function is to preach the gospel." Such a statement is frequently heard today and it represents a rather widespread attitude. But how can the gospel be preached without touching business and politics and every other phase of life? Is not the gospel the "good news" of the life of love? Should the church make religion a narrow, ineffectual force that deals with life only at minor points? The church dare not keep out of politics and business.

But the church should carefully define its function at this point. The concern of the church should be to see that government is organized and public affairs administered in keeping with Jesus' evaluation of life. A congregation cannot afford to become partisan. To take sides on such questions is often to disrupt a group. The function of the church is not to declare itself on every political issue, but to make men willing to perform their duties as citizens in the interests of human values.

However, many issues that concern the moral welfare of the local community often arise and churches feel called upon to champion one side. Frequently, some candidate takes a stand that is an offense against public morals. In many such cases, the church has used its organized forces to attempt to defeat the candidate and his cause. But whenever such action is taken, it invites criticism from without and dissension from within its ranks.

This is not to say the church should not face the issues of the local community. And there are many ways of doing it. The church may give moral and financial support to those organizations which work for civic righteousness. If preacher and congregation are sufficiently frank and open-minded, the sermon may afford a means for many pertinent discussions of current questions. Adult classes, discussion groups, Sunday evening forums, and addresses by leaders of local civic organizations are other ways of considering the issues of the local community.

THE POOR, THE SICK, AND THE UNDERPRIVILEGED

Every community has its poor, its sick, and its underprivileged. Many centers in both city and country have groups of immigrants. All the cities and many of the villages have sections that are designated as the ''slums.'' Thousands exist who cannot take a normal place in society.

Much of the service rendered these persons should be done by technically trained workers. This is especially true in the cities where these groups are large. Help should be given, too, in a way that will make for continued self-respect on the part of the recipients. No one should be made a public charge by the indiscriminate giving of public help. Often a job is needed instead of food. The management of this whole problem calls for a skill and training not possessed by the average church member.

Where relief for these groups is adequately organized and administered, the church may well render its service by aiding and supporting the local organizations. It can create sentiment for their support, furnish leaders for their work, and advise as to their administration.

However, not all aid to these groups should be turned to professional social workers or to specialized institutions. The church can do a great deal in this field. Many needy groups and individuals who might not otherwise come under the supervision of these special institutions may be helped. The church needs some touch with the underprivileged and ministrations to them should not be turned entirely to professional workers. But the church, when it undertakes such service, should be wise as well as altruistic.

AMUSEMENTS AND RECREATION

Scarcely a community exists that has no interest in amusements or recreation. It is a rare community, too, that has no problem at this point. And most churches, whether they know the way out or not, are acutely aware of difficulties with regard to them.

Recreation lacking.—Many communities are sadly lacking in recreation. Whatever is done is left to the initiative of individuals. A few back lots turned into tennis courts and improvised golf courses constitute the recreational facilities of the favored few in many centers. Hundreds of public schools are inadequately provided with equipment for programs of physical education. Community life in too many cases is devoid of recreational opportunities.

Commercialized amusements flourish.—Commercialized amusements are now in great vogue. Nor are they confined to the bright lights of Broadway. The remotest town has its movie house. The cities have theaters that are veritable palaces. Many of these show places are patronized daily by thousands. Professional baseball, boxing, wrestling and even football have a large following. The number of persons attending places of amusement within a week's time is enormous.

Not all of the amusement offered the public is decent. Some of it is vicious. Notwithstanding boards of censors and restrictive legislation, in both the *blasé* city and the small town, some amusements are corruptive in their effects. Public dance halls, where most of the dancing is now done,[6] flourish in hamlet and city. The roadhouse is a familiar sight since the coming of the automobile. It is to be found not merely near the city but on frequented highways close by villages and towns. Many of them take advantage of their remoteness from police surveillance and become centers of corrupting influence. And so one could go on to mention various types of unwholesome amusement that are found everywhere. There is an amusement problem in every city and town.

The movie.—Without doubt, the movie is one of the most influential institutions in the American community. It is patronized by old and young, particularly the young. Many audiences are composed largely of children, and particularly is this true with the cheaper houses. The ideals, the views of life, and the standards of conduct portrayed there have become too often a part of our childhood and youth.

And what filth the movies have frequently reveled in! Sex has saturated many productions. Crime has been minutely described. The church has been burlesqued and religion presented as silly piousness. Underworld life has been made alluring. Drinking has been enticingly pictured. Jungle morals have too largely predominated. It therefore behooves the church to take note of what these amusement houses are offering the young.

---

[6] See *The Kit,* No. 14, 1928.

Free time and ready money.—Closely related to and accentuating the problem of amusements and recreation are two outstanding facts of our modern life. These are free time and ready money. Never before has the human race had more free time at its disposal. Once man's life was a struggle for mere existence. Long hours were his lot. Now the five-day week has come to many centers. The half holiday on Saturday is very common in modern industry. Even the farmer, once supposed to labor from sun to sun, has his leisure hours.

And along with this increase in leisure time has come an increase in ready money. The weekly or fortnightly pay check means a frequent supply of cash. Having the means and the time, many patronize the amusements that are near at hand.

One can scarcely overestimate the importance of this combination of free time and ready money. It is during these leisure hours, even more so than while at work, that character is formed. The writer once heard a university teacher say, ''The Kingdom of God will be determined largely in the future in free time.'' If the leisure time of a community is freighted with possibilities of character development, then the church is vitally concerned.

What the church can do.—Since Jesus offered no specific pronouncement about recreation, his emphasis upon the supremacy and sacredness of personality should govern. The church can stand for those forms of recreation that do not exploit the participants but actually re-create. It can oppose those forms that debase. It can urge its members to discriminate in their choice of amusements. It can stand for the kind of recreation that re-creates and that adds to the zest of right living.

If fellowship, as has been contended in an earlier chapter, is an essential element in the life of a congregation, then a church may well look to some forms for its own enjoyment. But whatever the church undertakes in this regard should be interesting and above reproach. The church should not attempt to compete with the recreation of any group but should use those forms suited to its needs and purposes. In other words, recreation should be used constructively. The church should use types of recreation that are unquestioned as to their moral effects. The way it conducts its recreational activities should make for character. Anything that puts recreation on a low plane should be avoided.

The church can foster playgrounds for the children. It can stand for wholesome entertainment and where community resources are meager may even supply some of it. Not the least service the church can render is to develop sentiment for a clean, constructive play life for old and young. And in regard to these the church can cite numerous examples. The church has turned more than one vacant lot into a tennis court. Community pageants have been fostered. City-wide drama leagues have been organized and their programs developed. Lyceum courses have been conducted. There are many ways in which the church may help the community to those forms of recreation and amusement which will build and ennoble life.

The church may well undertake to create sentiment for a wholesome type of movie. Motion pictures and the movietone have too many possibilities for good to be discarded. The difficulty of dealing with a group of producers who seem to be opposed to any kind of censorship and who are ready to produce what seems to promise the greatest box receipts, is well known.[7] Nothing but a sentiment that affects the profits of the motion picture industry seems to be effective. And the church can help to a discriminating attitude toward this form of amusement.

COMMUNITY IDEALS

A community has ideals that find expression in tangible form. A visitor making his first trip up and down the streets of a city will see evidences of the civic ideals held by the citizenship. The dominant ideals of a community are symbolized in institutions, in public buildings, in monuments and memorials, in parks, and in various other expressions.

The old saloon-ridden towns and cities bear marks to this day of their ''saloon days.'' The peculiar corner building with its mute testimony still stands. Parks, or lack of parks, tell their story, too. A tale is told by the public square and the way it is kept. The streets, the lawns, the homes, the buildings, all bear witness to civic pride or to a lack of it.

Public buildings.—Public buildings are frequently expressive of ideals. The new Nebraska capitol is an example of this. It is a low building except for a gigantic tower that rises in beauty and strength. The low broad wings symbolize the wide prairies upon which the building stands while the uplifted tower represents the high ideals of the people. Then in fresco and tile and stone are portrayed the struggles of a pioneer generation and the ideals that should govern a righteous commonwealth.

---

[7] Fred Eastman in a series of articles published in the *Christian Century* in the spring of 1930, impartially stated the problem. These articles have since been published in pamphlet form.

But what does this discussion have to do with the program of the church?

Anything in the community that stands for higher ideals the church may foster. Perhaps it is in the development of sentiment that the church can do most. And above all its own symbols of the religious life can be made effective. The architecture of the building may be made expressive of some great religious ideal.

The tower of the new chapel of the University of Chicago is to the writer a wonderfully expressive symbol of the strength of religion. It rises an object of beauty and of strength above all the near-by buildings. And whether gilded by the morning sun, softened by the evening moon, or hidden by floating cloud, the tower stands. And when completely obscured by fog and mist, one has the feeling that it is there unshaken and unafraid. And, if one has caught its message, one cannot see it without being impressed with the strength and beauty of religion.

COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

The public library.—In every community are institutions which the church may use or with which working relations may be established. The public library is one of these. The library will furnish many books church leaders need if such books are called for and used when supplied. The church will find the average public library an important resource for helpful materials which otherwise might not be available. And if the church is sufficiently interested it may help the library to feature the better type of literature and thereby create a taste for it.

The public school.—The public school is another institution that touches the church at many vital points. Neither should work oblivious to the program of the other. The church should know the content of the teaching of the public school so that the religious implications of what is taught may be pointed out. Programs of character education are being conducted by many schools and this the church may make to supplement its own program. Sometimes the demands of the public school upon the pupil's time is such as to absorb his interest and his energy. In some cases the churches of a community have come to agreement with school boards as to a schedule that will permit a larger claim by the church upon the pupil. The church in making its program should take account of these relationships to the public school.

Other organizations.—In most communities there are organizations doing religious work or work that has a direct bearing upon character development. Some of these bid for the support of church groups while others seek to have their programs adopted by existent organizations within the church. Such organizations as the Christian associations, the Boy Scouts, and the Camp Fire Girls are in this group.

The church will need to define relationships with these organizations. Programs may need correlation. All of which should be done in co-operation with them. The contributions of these organizations, if properly used, may greatly aid the church as it seeks to carry out its program in relation to community life.

Thus, it is seen, the church is not necessarily an isolated institution in a community. It may be a telling factor in the life of the group in the midst of which it is situated. It touches many local institutions. It may lift its voice and call all to the lofty ideals of the Man of Galilee.

For Further Investigation

1. How can the local church lift the moral and artistic level of the amusements offered in the community?
2. Investigate the effects upon character of the movies, athletics, the playground and other forms of recreation and amusements found in your community.
3. What can a church do to develop a taste for wholesome literature?
4. Investigate the effectiveness of public memorials in the teaching of ideals.
5. What are the principles that should govern the working relations of a local church to organizations doing charitable work in the community?

Bibliography

Kent, C. F., and Jenks, J. W.: Jesus' Principles of Living, chap. v, Charles Scribner's Sons.
Weston, Sidney A.: Jesus' Teachings, chap. viii, The Pilgrim Press.
Cope, H. F.: Principles of Christian Service.
Mathews, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chap. vii, Macmillan.
Guild, Roy B.: Editor, Community Programs for Co-operating Churches, Association Press.

CHAPTER IX

FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHURCHES

SCRIPTURES

JOHN 17: 20, 21.—Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What was Jesus' conception of an individual? of society?
2. Is co-operation essential to progress? Why?
3. Point out ways in which your local church can share with other churches in building the Kingdom.
4. What are the local enterprises in which your church can co-operate with other churches?

A fact that every local church should take into account is the presence in the same community of other bodies of believers in Christ. On the same block as many as four or five church buildings may stand. These house groups which cherish various beliefs and are divided by certain historic differences, yet all are followers of Christ and seek to carry out his will.

What shall be the relationships between such groups? Shall they co-operate or shall each go its own way? If co-operation is desirable how far shall it go and what shall be its form? These are questions every local church must consider as it builds its program.

And not only are there other groups within the local community, but there are groups without. Shall a local church seek some measure of co-operation with them? The interdependence of the world of our day compels an answer to this question.

Few local churches acknowledge no kinship to other local groups. Each is bound to others by ties of common belief and practice. Each is a member of some communion. This confronts each congregation with questions of relationships to those groups of its own faith.

What fellowship a local church will have with others, what policies of co-operation will be pursued, and what enterprises will be shared in are, then, vital questions which each group must answer. They should be honestly and frankly faced as the program of the church is made.

What Did Jesus Teach About Fellowship?

In a previous chapter[1] it has been pointed out that Jesus, so far as our records reveal, said little about the church as an institution. No word of his indicates the place of the local congregation in the scheme of the Christian movement. That a group may live unto itself, however, is justified neither by the teaching of Jesus nor by the practice of his early followers. The New Testament bears ample testimony to the interdependence of local groups.

Relation of the individual to society.—Jesus' teaching on the relations of the individual to society has a bearing at this point. In his emphasis he attained a remarkable balance between the individual and society. With him it was not an individual and society but an individual in society. The unit Jesus recognized was not the mere individual but the individual-in-his-relationships-to-others. One is an individual not because he is apart from others but because he is a part of others.

---

[1] Chapter ii.

Jesus stressed the importance of the individual. The notion, current some decades ago, that society is all and the individual nothing, finds no justification in his teaching. Society does not obliterate individuals. It does not exist apart from the persons who comprise it. By his emphasis upon the supreme worth of man—even ''these little ones''—Jesus in no uncertain terms exalted the individual.

According to Jesus' teaching, every man is responsible to God. Everyone has his own relationships and obligations to the Father. Each man must give an account of his stewardship.[2] The individual is not lost in the group; he is personally responsible to God.

The individuality of Jesus.—Jesus himself maintained an individuality that was unique. It was an individuality that stood out, not through a domineering attitude but through the enhancement that comes from service to others. He gave himself to others without reserve and in the end found an individuality supreme.

In the choice of his apostles, Jesus selected widely varying individuals. Simon, the Zealot, Matthew, the publican, Peter, impetuous fisherman, James and John, sons of thunder, and Thomas, man of caution, represented great differences as individuals. But at

[2] Matthew 18:23; Luke 16:2.

no time did he seek to fashion them after a single pattern. Loyalty to the ideals of the Kingdom with each individual free to express his loyalty in his own way seemed to be all Jesus demanded of his followers.

While Jesus has been called the real discoverer of the individual,[3] he nevertheless made no inordinate emphasis at this point. He always saw the individual in his relations to others. The group was important because it was composed of individuals and because there were vital relationships existing among its members.

Thus Jesus by an emphasis upon the individual and his obligations to others makes co-operation a fundamental principle for human endeavor. Since the pure individual does not exist in fact and since a person cannot be abstracted from his relationships to others, co-operative procedure alone is possible. Men must work together. To refuse to do so is to contradict the principles of progress. Jesus' deep insight made him quick to see this truth.

Nor does this co-operative principle cease when individuals definitely band themselves into organizations. The members of groups that serve a common cause will find the widest co-operation necessary if the largest success is to come. Progress can be expected only when the human race practices co-operation.

REASONS FOR CHURCH CO-OPERATION

Essential nature of the Christian life.—There are many reasons for co-operation among local churches. One is that the essential nature of the Christian life demands it. Christian living is a sharing process. Groups cannot live unto themselves any more than individuals can. For a local church to find fellowship and co-operative relations with other churches is but to widen the application of the principle of individual co-operation. It is inevitable that Christian groups should unite for fellowship and mutual sustenance. To live apart as individuals or groups is to thwart that which is implicit in Christian living itself.

---

[3] See Kent, C.F. and Jenks, J. W., *Jesus' Principles of Living,* Page 138. Scribners.

As a matter of wisdom, the local church should emphasize its obligations to other groups rather than its independence of them. Its own life will be richer when it enters into the largest fellowship with other congregations. No church group will lose by such a policy; it will gain through a generous attitude of co-operation. The Christian religion lives by giving; it starves by withholding.

The missionary task and co-operation.—A congregation working alone cannot do its full share of building the Kingdom of God. Some enterprises are quite beyond the resources of most local groups. Only as they unite their forces can they even share in some phases of the work of Kingdom building.

The whole task of carrying the gospel to other lands is one which cannot be done by the independent efforts of local congregations. Relatively few churches can raise funds sufficient to send out and support a worker in a distant land. If they cannot unite their resources with those of other congregations, they cannot share in this necessary work of making the Kingdom world-wide. If a means of co-operation had not been found, most local groups would have had no share in the glorious missionary enterprises of the past. The cause of Christ would have languished and probably would have died.

Making Christ known in the needy places of our own land likewise depends upon the co-operative endeavor of many local groups. Few congregations single-handed can cope with these problems. Only united effort can effectively meet such situations.

What congregation without help from others can adequately minister to the migrating element of foreign peoples who may be in its immediate vicinity? Can the uplifting and Christianizing of the Negro race be accomplished by near-by churches assuming sole responsibility? Manifestly, to leave such problems to local groups is to leave them unsolved. Co-operation is a necessity.

Occasions of stress.—In addition to these standing problems that seem to be ''always with us,'' there are occasions of catastrophe and emergency which cannot be met by church groups working alone. A hurricane, a flood, an earthquake and scores of churches may be brought to the point of need. Work cannot be continued without help to restore lost buildings and depleted resources. Even an effective appeal for aid cannot be made except through some co-operative agency. These situations of stress cannot be met save through a policy of wide sharing.

The value of co-operation.—Co-operation has a cumulative effect. Its results are not to be forecast by simple mathematical addition. Its returns are more than the sum of the various efforts made. Each local church stimulated by the others and each profiting by the experiences of others is able to do more than it could ever do working alone. The co-operative principle must be applied to assure the maximum of fruitage from any group.

Co-operation makes statesmanship possible in planning and directing the Kingdom enterprise. Issues are often nation- and even world-wide. Prohibition, world peace, and interracial good will are questions too broad for local groups to handle. A congregation working alone would be an unheard voice in a wilderness. There is such a thing as Christian statesmanship, and co-operation makes it possible.

In the foregoing discussion the local church has been assumed to be the fundamental organizational unit of the Christian movement. This grows out of the very nature of the situation itself. The individual Christian will work in a local group, if he works with others at all. But to make this assumption does not give the local church the right to do what it pleases and only what it pleases. It is bound to other groups by the sacred ties of a common task. Fellowship in a mutual enterprise and service to the same Master are sacred ties. Co-operation is a Christian obligation.

Fellowship Within the Communion

Modern Christendom is divided into many branches. Each branch finds its identity in certain historic emphases and common beliefs. Each is organized for corporate expression according to the form of polity it holds desirable. Some bind their local groups into closely knit ecclesiastical systems; others prefer congregational independence with moral obligations the only ties. Each religious body carries on enterprises in benevolences, education, evangelism, and missions.

Practically all local groups of Christians recognize some relationship to other groups. And the question that each must answer is what share of the total program of the communion it will assume. What should the program of the local church contain relative to the work of the communion of which it is a member?

Information.—First, a local group can be informed of the plans and enterprises of the various benevolent and missionary boards. The ignorance at this point is usually appalling. Too many Christians cannot speak intelligently of the work of their own communion to say nothing of the work of other religious bodies. Classes, visits by representatives of benevolent and missionary agencies, and the literature of the communion are among the means for securing this information. The church through its program should attempt to make an intelligent congregation.

Conventions.—A local church can participate in the councils or conventions of its communion. If its representatives are well informed, a contribution may be made. Laymen as well as ministers should attend. Such a policy not only will link the local church to the total task of the communion but it will help to make a group more intelligent as to the Kingdom enterprise. The local church should plan for this fellowship and co-operation.

Contributions of money.—Perhaps the chief way in which the local church can participate in the larger program is by contributions of money. In the budget of every church should be an item for the tasks the churches together plan to do. Properly motivated the giving of this money becomes a means of Christian enrichment. This money should be as carefully raised and spent as any part of the church budget. It should not be left to occasional offerings and spasmodic appeals. Only a careful plan for informing a group of the program of the communion and a definite system for raising and spending money will enable a local church to share fully in the great tasks of Kingdom building.

ATTITUDE TOWARD CHURCHES OF OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES

In most communities there are congregations representing two or more religious bodies. The local church is thus confronted with the question of its relationships to these groups. What shall its attitude be?

Perhaps a church should first recognize that the divisions separating the various religious groups are historical. Some are superficial and outgrown. Others are inconsequential. Some of the divisions, however, are over major issues and cannot be ignored. But a local church can cultivate a friendly attitude and can seek to appreciate the good in all and the contribution each may make. Somehow if such an attitude could be developed on the part of every local group the way would be paved for a greater degree of unity than one can at present hope for.

A local church should realize, too, that the redemption of the community in which it is situated awaits the co-operation of the churches. The task is too big and complicated for one group. Only as the limited resources of local churches are united can Christian communities be developed.

Competition between churches.—The churches in many communities operate on a clearly competitive basis. If one gives a program or has a supper, the others will do likewise. A party for young people in one church is likely to be followed by parties for youth in the others. Leaders watch the attendance of the church across the street and measure their own success by how nearly they reach the one in the van, or by how much they excel others. Co-operation is limited almost to union church services on Thanksgiving and Sunday evenings during the summer. Fortunately this picture is not universally true but it does describe the conditions existing in countless communities.

The influence of a church and co-operation.—Unless a local church prefers a secluded exclusivism, it will find times when it desires to express an opinion on civic questions and to make its influence felt on public morals. Where two or three churches exist, any one of them acting alone likely will have little influence in a community. If, however, a way is found for the expression of a common opinion and for united action, then a church can make itself felt for good in civic life.

There are times when a church will desire to influence public policies. Commercialized amusements are often corrupting in their effects. Churches may develop a sentiment against them and may marshal the vote for measures that will bring them under stricter control. Pressure may be brought against officials to compel a better enforcement of the laws.

If churches have learned to work together and have found an avenue for co-operative effort, not only can many evils be eliminated from community life but numerous worthy enterprises may be fostered.

Co-operative enterprises.—Churches are now finding co-operation to be the best way for doing certain tasks of their own. Many enterprises are co-operative wholly or in part. Vacation church schools are sometimes conducted strictly on a co-operative basis. Some, however, are co-operative only in certain features, the churches uniting in their promotion and in the training of faculties with the school set up as an individual church project.

Thousands of schools for the training of church school leaders are held annually. Story-telling, dramatization, and pageantry are lines of work in which churches frequently co-operate in community-wide programs.

The week-day church school is another enterprise which has enlisted the co-operation of local churches. Wherever pupils are to be released from public school time and relations are to be established with school boards, it is quite generally agreed that the approaches should be made co-operatively. A church working alone will scarcely meet with the consideration that churches together may anticipate.

Thus in local communities whenever churches are willing to unite their efforts, many opportunities will come for common action. And if they are really concerned about the redemption of the community, they will find a way to work in co-operation. When the desire of Jesus to serve humanity becomes the passion of the churches, a way to labor together will be found.

Co-operative agencies.—Many opportunities are afforded a local church to share with groups in other communities through co-operative agencies. In the matter of religious education, these organizations are rather thoroughgoing. State and provincial councils make possible a pooling of resources in which local churches may share. The International Council of Religious Education is increasing in power and usefulness. Here the leaders of the various co-operating religious bodies center and all working together produce standards, guides and plans which are made available to local churches. Thus the effectiveness of the work done in the local church may be increased through the co-operative endeavor carried on under the direction of the International Council of Religious Education.

There are many other organizations which carry on work of various kinds. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is a medium through which the constituent members may bring a united voice against certain great evils. It conducts research investigations on a wide scale. It affords an avenue of approach to many questions which religious bodies alone would not have.

The Missionary Education Movement is an agency through which thirty-five boards of home and foreign missions representing sixteen religious bodies cooperate in planning, editing, and publishing materials for missionary education. It also conducts summer missionary conferences. As the various religious bodies share in the production of materials and in the holding of training centers, the standards for these are undoubtedly higher than if each group worked alone. The local church shares in the benefits of this co-operative endeavor when its own program of missionary education is improved through the use of a higher grade of missionary materials.

In addition to these, many other organizations exist. They represent efforts on the part of various religious bodies to join their resources and leadership in the production of materials, the refinement of techniques, and the development of enterprises of service in which all may share. The life of the local church may be made rich indeed if it will but avail itself of what the co-operative agencies have to offer.

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Co-operation among churches raises the whole question of Christian unity. Jesus prayed that his disciples and all those who came to believe in him might be one. He indicated that they should be bound by the same unity which united him and the Father. This, he said, was necessary to convince the world that God had sent him.[4] A unity in spirit and purpose Jesus knew was necessary to the success of his cause.

Many proposals have been made to bring about Christian unity. For centuries men have longed for it. But obstacles have been too great. Differences have proved irreconcilable. Propositions offered have demanded concessions greater than those who made the proposals were willing to make. So, while efforts

[4] John 17:20, 21.

to unite the various religious bodies have been frequent, Christendom stands shamefully divided.

Christian unity perhaps has been thought of too largely in terms of ecclesiastical organizations or creedal acceptances. It has not been conceived as a oneness in spirit and purpose. Union rather than unity has been the outcome sought. Conformity has been prized more highly than unity of purpose. Had emphasis been less on organizational and creedal aspects, many past attempts might have met a better fate.

Many do not realize the possibilities for unity that lie in co-operative effort. For after all, a oneness of spirit can come only through a oneness of endeavor. If the churches would have unity, they can find it most easily through united work. Co-operation is the best approach. To unite in a training school, a service to needy groups, or a campaign to clean up a community is more than a gesture toward Christian unity. It is to practice the very essence of that for which the Master prayed.

Every church which shares with another is helping the cause of unity. And not until local churches learn to work together will Christian unity be but a name; not until their programs include co-operative enterprises will Christian unity be more than a dream.

What the local church can do.—There is a great deal that a local church can do toward Christian unity. It may inform its members of the great Christian union and unity movements and of the obstacles they encounter. It may seek to discover the contribution its communion may make to the cause. It may develop a passion for unity. And above all it can unite with other groups in common undertakings. It can share in efforts to develop a civic righteousness. And when once it has a mind to do so, a church can make its program bear the imprint of a desire to co-operate with Christian groups everywhere and in whatever activities are needed to make the world Christian.

Through co-operative enterprises churches will usher in that unity about which Jesus was so greatly concerned. In no other way will it come.

For Further Investigation

1. How does supreme loyalty to Jesus affect one's individuality?
2. What are the New Testament examples of sharing on the part of church groups?
3. What is the difference between union and unity?
4. What is the nature of recent proposals for Christian unity?
5. What is the contribution of such organizations as the Religious Education Association and the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations to Christian Unity?

Bibliography

McAfee, C. B.: The Christian Message and Program, study xi, The Westminster Press.
Cavert, Samuel McCrea: The Adventure of the Church, pp. 139-146, Missionary Education Movement and Council of Women for Home Missions.
Can the Churches Unite? A Symposium, The Century Company.
Van Kirk, Walter W.: Youth and Christian Unity, Doran.
Fortune, A. W.: The Church of the Future, chap. vi, The Bethany Press.

CHAPTER X

MAKING ECONOMIC LIFE CHRISTIAN

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 6:19-21.—Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

MATTHEW 6:33.—But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are the effects of machines upon persons? Society? Production?
2. How do you account for the fact that Jesus did not outline an economic system?
3. What can the church do to offset the deadening effect of tending machines?
4. What should be the attitude of a congregation toward its members who are rich?
5. How does unemployment affect the religious life of a community?
6. Indicate what a local church should do in case of a local strike.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR ECONOMIC LIFE

The machine, the smokestack, the tenement, and the skyscraper are the symbols of our industrial age. The machine speaks of the mechanization of life that has gone steadily on since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The smokestack with its black clouds points to the power without which the machine would be helpless. The tenement tells the story of the worker. And the skyscraper symbolizes the ingenuity of management and finance. All portray a complexity beyond imagination.

The mechanization of life.—Since the Industrial Revolution began nearly two centuries ago, the mechanization of the manufacturing process has made steady progress. Every up-to-date factory is today a center of invention. Processes involving the work of many hands are constantly being taken over by new machines. Efficiency experts are employed to study every movement in the manufacture of a commodity, and whole factory systems are overhauled to reduce human labor. The larger industries employ highly paid corps of technical experts whose duty is to devise new machines and processes which will increase the effectiveness of human effort.

The mechanization of life has gone far beyond the manufacturing process. Much of what was once drudgery is now done by machines. The ditch digger, the steam shovel, the lifting crane, and all the labor-saving devices of the home are illustrations. In most of the tasks of life man uses a machine.

Corporate organization.—Along with the machinizing of industry has gone the development of the corporation. The corporation is a legal entity which enables many persons to unite their resources and operate as an individual. Much of the world's business is done by these legal entities. It is safe to say that without them business and industry would never have reached their present proportions.

Corporate organization has made possible large scale operations. The production of goods, particularly in the manufacturing process, has been done increasingly on a large scale. The marketing of commodities shows the same tendency, as indicated by the development of the chain store in grocery, drug, and other lines. More and more the producing and selling of goods are conducted on gigantic proportions made possible through the corporate organization of resources.

Recently a tendency has been manifested to consolidate great industrial enterprises and to form super-organizations. Railroad systems are gradually being united into a few major groups. Banks large and small are being merged. There seems to be almost no limit to the size of these groupings. Corporate organization has enabled men to form these giant structures and to conduct their operations on vast and intricate lines.

The industrial, business, and financial life of the present is a structure of vast proportions and intricate parts. It is bound so closely together that one section cannot suffer without affecting all. Bigness and complexity are its chief characteristics. Its effects upon human living are significant. These will be discussed in another section of this chapter.

Women in business and industry.—A new element—but no inconsequential one—in our economic life is the entrance of women in large numbers into the industrial and business world. Woman has always been in industry, but only recently has practically every occupation been open to her. She is barred from none except by limitations of physical strength. Now women hold places alongside of men and in many instances displace them. Wages in certain sections are disturbed. Production is increased. It is too early to detect the full significance of this new element, but it is safe to predict that it will prove to be of vast importance.

More would need to be said to give an adequate picture of our economic order, but these paragraphs will suffice to show its size and complexity. It touches every person at many points. The issues within it are questions of human welfare. How they are settled will affect the weal or woe of the whole world. In fact the Kingdom of God hangs in the balance. There can be no Kingdom of love that does not include the economic life of our civilization.

THE EFFECTS OF OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Increase in wealth.—Chief among the results of our economic development is a prodigious increase in wealth. The quantity is vast. The total income of the people of the United States in 1926 was estimated at ninety billions of dollars. Its distribution, however, is by no means equal or equitable. While more persons are sharing in the wealth of the country than ever before, the rich at the same time are becoming richer. According to the Federal income tax returns for 1927, ten persons had net incomes of five million dollars or over. Two hundred eighty-three had incomes of one million or over. Some 33,000 had incomes of $50,000 or over. There were 4,100,000 returns made. Forty-five millions are gainfully employed. It would seem that ninety-one per cent of the 45,000,000 receive under the income tax minimum of $1500 for single persons or $3500 for those married. It is easy to see that the great wealth of this land is by no means equally or equitably distributed.

The vast wealth of this country is due to the increasing productivity of workers. It has been said that one man now by the aid of machinery can produce as much as fifty slaves once did. And the invention of new machines and the development of more efficient management are combining to increase rather than to diminish production.

This increase in wealth has made for luxurious living. The abundance of automobiles, radios, high priced apartments, and numerous other costly articles are evidences of the luxury of modern life. The standards of living for those who have wealth are uncommonly high, and modern advertising is seeing to it that all desire the luxuries of the rich.

The desire for wealth has become a great obsession. It dominates countless lives. It puts a jungle-like spirit of competition into the business world. The Wall Street debacle of 1929 revealed how widespread was the desire to get rich overnight. Will the desire for wealth come to possess us and dominate our lives? This is a fair question to ask.

Leisure time.—The increase in the productivity of labor has resulted in added leisure time, as has been pointed out in a previous chapter.[1] Such a situation may yield good or ill. What one does in leisure time is as important for character, if not more so, than what he does while at work. The temptations of life come largely in free time. A vast amount of the personal service the human race renders is done then.

---

[1] Chapter viii.

The increasing of leisure time has paved the way for far-reaching good or evil. To make it yield creative and re-creative forms of activity and to minister to the spiritual enrichment of the race, is a problem which Christian forces must attempt to solve.

The effect of machines upon persons.—Machinery is by no means an unmitigated blessing. While it has brought luxury and leisure, it has taken a fearful toll in human life and happiness.

In its beginning the factory system drew into its maw countless children. It robbed them of their childhood and denied them old age. Even today in certain sections of the country child labor has not been entirely eliminated. The toil of little fingers brings greater profits. Women, and especially mothers, have paid tribute to the machine. The invention of machines constantly throws men out of work and even eliminates whole skilled trades. Whether the machine shows a profit or a loss in the matter of blessing mankind, is a question many would be willing to debate.

The effect of the machine upon the machine tender has been deadening. Without doubt it dulls his intellect. He dare not think while at work or he will lose pace with the speed of the machine. Imagination is stifled. And all impulses to creative work are lost in the rhythm of wheels. He cannot see himself a part of a great creative process that serves human needs. He often is the man truly described in Edwin Markham's ''The Man with the Hoe.''

Becoming a cog in a machine makes difficult the enhancement of personal values. No one seems sure of what compensatory activity such a person can engage in outside of work hours to keep him a growing person. On the whole, the machine constitutes a problem of no small consequence.

This is not to say that machinery is all evil. It is here to stay. It has brought too many good things to the world to be discarded. But it has brought a situation which cannot be met by ignoring it. Only as one faces the implications of the machine can it be made a positive good.

The impersonalization of economic life.—The economic life of the world is becoming more and more impersonal. Most of the business of the human race is conducted through corporations. And a corporation is said to be without a ''soul.'' That is, it is impersonal. It deals with many persons, but not as person to person. It is difficult to find anyone who is responsible for the actions of a corporation. It has the legal status of a person, the combined power of many individuals, and up to a certain point an indefinite responsibility.

The tendency of the business and industrial world to operate on a large scale further accentuates the impersonal element. The operations are directed by persons who are seldom seen by those most vitally concerned. They are carried out by persons whose interest in the processes is largely limited to the wages they receive for their labor. Even the retailing of groceries, which touches every family almost daily, is becoming through the chain store an impersonal matter. Thus, in an economic way, the world is served largely by persons whose primary interest is not in the service rendered.

This impersonalization is further enhanced by the stock-and-bond method of financing modern business. Stocks and bonds are standardized and offered on the market. The promised returns attract buyers. These buyers are far removed from the actual processes of the concerns they have financed. Their interests are limited to the dividends paid. They are not particularly interested in how the returns are earned. Profits are all they demand of the enterprise.

Competition, the basic principle.—The old saying, ''Competition is the life of trade,'' we have been told, is a maxim of all good business. It is, however, less a statement of fact than a subtle defense of our profit-making order. But be that as it may, it is truly descriptive of our economic life.

Competition would not be so bad if it were competition to serve rather than to accumulate profits. But our economic life has been competitive with dividends as the object sought. Service has not figured as largely as it should.

Competition for profits is ruthless. It disregards human values. It eliminates the higher considerations of personal worth. The laborers become means. The least that will satisfy the buyer is offered for what he pays. In the end, the whole system proves wasteful. The competitive principle demands a fearful price.

The upshot of the whole matter is that personal values are too little considered in our economic processes. Profits are the dominant aim. Business, therefore, becomes ''cold-blooded.'' Any consideration of the personal elements always disturbs the flow of dividends; personal considerations, therefore, are likely to be too frequently thrust into the background. The service motive is set aside by the profit motive. The promise of big returns makes business ruthlessly competitive. And in the end a profit-making, competitive economic order is wasteful in the extreme. It depends upon expensive advertising. It wrecks thousands of industries. It creates a great army of unemployed. Our economic life is becoming more and more impersonal. How to stop this drift is of great concern.

This is not to ignore the many attempts in American life to make industrial concerns personal. Many of these experiments are significant and successful. One of such enterprises to come to the attention of the writer is a canning factory. This concern faced the matter of seasonal employment and modified its processes so as to furnish continuous work. The dividends earned are paid to both labor and capital. A managing council on which labor is represented determines the salaries even of the superintendent. It employs and dismisses. Hospital service is provided for all employees. In other words, the process of producing a certain commodity has been socialized. It is interesting to note that the profits in this case have not suffered.

Such experiments as the foregoing are pointing the way to a better economic order. But they are all too few. Many business men are frank to say business is ruthless and can never be otherwise. This attitude must be changed, and the men who make our economic order must become willing to try to make business serve persons and enrich human living.

Class lines sharpened.—Another effect of modern economic developments is the accentuation of class lines. The workman is more likely to remain a workman. The managers and the capitalists tend to form a class apart. Even farming, now that it is becoming largely a machine process and is requiring increasing amounts of capital, is in danger of turning farmers into peasants. Class divisions are sharpening as a result of our present-day economic developments.

Unemployment.—Our economic order results in a host of unemployed. Through many causes millions are constantly out of work. With practically every factory developing machines which can do the work of several persons, the employed forces are gradually being reduced. A new machine may turn a group of skilled laborers into the class of the unskilled—and the unemployed. The recent wholesale entrance of women into industry and business has had its effects upon wages and employment. This addition of more workers and the development and use of machinery have increased per capita production. The result is overproduction in many cases and consequent unemployment.

The extent of unemployment is unknown. The National Bureau of Economic Research has estimated that unemployment between the years of 1920 and 1927 ranged from a minimum of 1,400,000 to 4,270,000. An estimate of the number of unemployed in the winter of 1929-1930 places it at between four and six million workers.[1] So acute has the situation recently become that the Federal Council of

---

[1] See article by Norman Thomas, "A Program for Unemployment," in *The World Tomorrow,* May, 1930.

Churches appointed Sunday, April 27, 1930 as a day for the expression of sympathy with and the seeking of means to aid unemployed persons.

Some employers are content to have a large group of unemployed in the country. It gives them an accessible labor supply with which to beat down wages. They fail to see that the unemployed are not even potential, to say nothing of being actual, buyers. Even business suffers because of unemployment. It has been pointed out that overproduction is not so much a fact as under-consumption. We could consume what our machines produce if everyone was gainfully employed.

Unemployment is one of the most serious problems this country faces. It is nothing short of a curse. Without the means of meeting one's obligations and taking a citizen's place in society, self-respect is difficult to maintain. In desperation many turn to crime. The pauperized mind, which delights to receive and not to give, is the consequence. With morale gone, morality is hard to maintain. Unemployment is a national calamity and a blotch upon any civilization.

Unemployment is all the more a calamity since so much of it is unnecessary. Many measures are now being advocated which, if put into operation, would relieve the situation. Federal and state employment agencies, the pushing of public works in dull times, and unemployment insurance[2] are chief among the measures proposed. The situation is not hopeless. It awaits only a resolute facing of the problem.

A source of motives.—But quite apart from what has already been said and of even greater significance is the fact that economic motives too universally dominate life. Workmen and capitalists alike are striving for a security they conceive possible only through surplus wealth. All want ''position,'' ''standing,'' the evidences of which are certain trappings that only wealth can buy. Man's worth is too often measured by his financial rating and his character by his ability to acquire. Thus to have security and position one must possess wealth. The very motives of life are drawn from economic sources, and wealth is given a worth that puts human values into the background.

---

[2] Note the suggestions in the article by Norman Thomas already referred to.

Such is our economic system. It is the result of no man's planning, but the consequence of a long development. It is phenomenal in many aspects and all-pervasive in its influences. Its maladjustments are complicated and serious. Its values are essential to human welfare, yet personality suffers at its hands. The Christian ideal has not yet possessed it. It is the greatest unoccupied area awaiting the conquest of Christian forces.

Jesus' Message to Our Economic Life

It is a far cry from the simple pastoral-agricultural life of first century Palestine to our modern complex industrial-business life represented by any panorama seen from the thirtieth floor of a skyscraper. The jagged sky line, the seventy-five-story office building, the rows of smokestacks, the noisy streets, the subway, the elevated—all speak of a life so complicated that one wonders if a simple Galilean who lived nineteen centuries ago can have a message for such an age.

Jesus, of course, knew nothing of many common-places of our modern economic order. Capitalism, factory production, large-scale operation, profit-sharing, and other phases of our business and industrial order did not exist in his day. But the fact that these present-day phenomena were unknown to him does not indicate he has no message to our day.

Jesus had a great deal to say about wealth. It was of too great a concern even in his day for him to ignore it. Men were seeking possessions. Greed was rampant. The strong preyed upon the weak. Jesus did not ignore these conditions, and the gospel writers, particularly Luke, have been careful to portray his attitude and record many of his pronouncements.

Advocated no particular economic system.—But Jesus' message to our economic life does not consist in the advocacy of a particular economic system. He was not seeking to organize living after any special economic pattern. Socialism, capitalism, communism, and all other "isms," as systems, find no support in his teaching. He was not concerned to deal with every economic problem of his day. Our gospels reveal no pronouncement of his upon the moral aspects of slavery. As a resident of Nazareth he surely saw the caravans of international commerce, yet he said nothing about trade, how it should be conducted and the profits, if any, one should receive from it. He did not declare specifically the wages a man should receive. And when a man came one day asking him to use his influence to induce a brother to divide an inheritance, Jesus refused to consider the economic aspects of the question.[3] It may safely be inferred

[3] Luke 12:13-15.

that Jesus was not concerned to give man a particular economic system.

This incident where Jesus refused to be a divider of an inheritance furnishes a clue to his message about wealth. He passed by the opportunity to discuss the principle of inheritance. He said nothing about the theory of private property. He did not even show how justice in such a case could be done. His interest was not in these questions. "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" was a decisive refusal to consider the strictly economic phases. His real interest was indicated by his statement to the crowd about him. "Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Jesus' concern was about persons and their motives and interests. Only as one keeps this fact in mind can he understand the message of Jesus to our economic life.

However, it should be said some economic systems are incompatible with the teaching of Jesus. Our ruthless competitive economic order that ignores personal values does not square with Jesus' emphasis upon human worth. And any system that makes persons means to some end stands condemned by what Jesus thought. The only economic plan that has his support is the one that places human values first.

Wealth of secondary value.—With Jesus, wealth was of secondary value. Life did not consist in an abundance of things. Kingdom values, which were personal, were to be sought first. The life of love, or of good will, was more essential than a life of wealth-getting. "Seek ye first the Kingdom" expressed the foundation attitude of the citizen of the new order.

With Jesus, wealth was ephemeral. The treasures of earth were attacked by moth and rust and were stolen by thieves.[4] The rich man who would trust in food and raiment found it after a time gone from him.[5] Ultimate dependence could not be put upon wealth. It did not represent abiding values.

The effect of wealth on personality.—Jesus was concerned about wealth because of its effect upon men. When the acquisition of wealth was made the primary interest, it tended to make men selfish and self-satisfied. It absorbed all their energies. It made them dull to the obligations of brotherhood and forgetful of the values of persons. The rich man feasting and oblivious to the cries of the abject Lazarus was blunted to every social obligation. The refusal of the rich man to part with his possessions in order to inherit eternal life showed how all-important wealth becomes. Then it was that Jesus exclaimed, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."[6] Wealth blights when it is made the chief end of living.

This explains Jesus' statement to his disciples to be not anxious about their eating and drinking or their clothing.[7] To make these their principal concern is to unfit them for membership in the Kingdom. Let them seek first the way of love and the necessities of life will follow therefrom.

[4] Matthew 6:19. [5] Luke 12:20. [6] Mark 10:24, 25. [7] Matthew 6:31.

Jesus taught that absorption in wealth is incompatible with putting God first. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."[8] Man can give supreme attention to only one thing at a time. If wealth is put first, other considerations are not likely to be made. God must be primary in man's life.

Jesus' attitude toward the poor.—Jesus' sympathies were with the poor. He was a member of no privileged class. At his birth his parents made the offering of the poor for the first-born.[9] Jesus grew up a toiler and continued in that class till he began his ministry. He constantly helped the downtrodden and outcast. They were always about him. He even went so far as to declare the poor and hungry and sorrowful to be the blessed of the earth.[10]

The giving of alms seems to have been taken for granted. The statement, "When therefore thou doest alms"[11] does not question the underlying assumption in almsgiving. It rather assumes alms are to be given. Indeed, there is reason to believe that Jesus himself gave alms.[12] And furthermore he seems to have received help, upon one occasion at least, from some women.[13] His disciples were to accept the hospitality of homes in the communities they visited on their preaching tours.[14]

Jesus' attitude toward the rich.—Jesus had no condemnation for a rich man as such. His pronouncements were against the misuse of wealth, not its possession. He chose Matthew, a publican and member of the affluent class, to be one of his disciples.[15] He declared salvation had come to the house of

---

[8] Matthew 6:24. [9] Luke 2:24 and Leviticus 12:8. [10] Luke 6:20-22. [11] Matthew 6:2, 3. [12] John 13:29. [13] Luke 8:3. [14] Mark 6:8. [15] Luke 5:29.

Zacchaeus.[16] He told the rich ruler to dispossess himself because the man let his wealth come first.[17] It was what wealth did to men and what they did with wealth that concerned Jesus. The Kingdom must be first. Human values must be put above material values. Jesus' whole message on wealth is compressed into one sweeping statement. "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self?"[18]

THE CHURCH AND ECONOMIC LIFE

When the church undertakes to modify the economic order, it at once discovers the difficulty of the task. With men drawing their motives from the economic life in which they are enmeshed, the problem becomes one of changing the mainsprings of human action. Motivation is at the heart of the problem and indicates how difficult any solution will be.

The difficulty of the situation is further enhanced by the fact that the Christian group is not one set apart from the world. And any message the church may have for a better economic order must first be preached to its own members. Many local congregations will be found so thoroughly committed to the present economic arrangements that they will lift no voice that will disturb the status quo. When a church group is satisfied with the motives and ideals that dominate its members, it is likely to resist any effort to change them.

The church in dealing with the economic situation should keep in mind its function, which is to hold

[16] Luke 19:9. [17] Mark 10:21. [18] Luke 9:25.

the Christ ideal, or the way of love, before the world and to make that way operative in economic relationships. In the working out of its function it may not need to advocate any particular economic system. The best shop organization or profit sharing plan may well be left to experts who have made such matters the subjects of special study. But the message of the church will have little effect if it is expressed in mere generalizations. To have power it must deal with specifics. Muddled thinking and cowardice always find refuge in generalizations. If Christian people are to be moved to reconstruct the economic order, the message of the church must deal with issues rather specifically. Anything clearly incompatible with Jesus' emphasis on personal values is to be condemned. The church should speak on child labor, unemployment, and a profit-impelled order that thrusts personal values into the background.

What the church can do.—The church can uphold the higher values of life and put those of wealth in a secondary place. It can measure success, not by money standards, but by service. To give a man a position of power in the life of the church because he is a person of wealth is to bow to mammon. Men and women should ever be evaluated by the service they render. The reputation of the preacher or teacher depends upon no salary check but upon their success in service. The physician is rated by his ability to heal. The business man, the industrial leader, and the laborer must be rated by the service they render. The church can uphold the service standard for measuring the worth of human effort.

The church can always stand for human values. Wherever the economic organization disregards them, the church has a duty to speak. Child labor, by no Christian standard, can be adjudged right. The labor of women should not be allowed to endanger motherhood. Health and safety are minimum requirements that may be insisted upon. Likewise are wages sufficient for decent living. The church can speak directly upon questions where human values are at stake.

In keeping with its emphasis upon personal values, the church can stand for those measures that oppose the impersonalizing of the economic order. The worker in an industry must have a greater share in its ownership. And the movements that look toward the elimination of unemployment may well be supported by the church. Many ways, if they are sought, will be found whereby the Christian group can speak and work for the placing of human values first in our economic order.

So embedded in the economic order are the Christian people of today that prophetic voices are needed to call the church to that emphasis upon personal values which must be made. Some daring spirits who see the issues clearly must be called out and supported. Those Christian groups which are ready to work for a new economic order wherein human values are first should make a contribution at this point.

The Local Church Program

What can a local group do to put persons above things? What can it do to make our economic life Christian?

1. First of all, it can rule its own household by standards that acknowledge the primacy of human values. Men and women should be elected to the offices of the church because of their fitness to serve and not because of their rating in a financial blue book. Every person, high or low, can be given equal opportunity to make to the Christian enterprise whatever contribution of which he is capable. This emphasis in the management of its own affairs will prove an effective teacher.

2. The sermon of the minister will be an important item in a program that looks to a new economic order. He is an interpreter of life. Through challenge he must stimulate right motives. His sermon can stress personal values. It can uphold standards of service that put human beings above wealth. It can call the Christian group to a new order wherein persons are more than things.

3. Many adult and young people's classes may study economic questions with a view to discovering a Christian solution. Other study groups may be organized. Community classes with an especially well qualified teacher may be conducted. Literature bearing upon the subject may be disseminated and read.

4. The church may undertake a forum where qualified speakers are invited to present special phases of the problem and opportunity is given for discussion and questions. Lecturers on economic topics may be heard. Such a program would not only make the church intelligent but it would convince many leaders of the genuine interest of the church in a Christian economic order.

Local issues will frequently arise, such as a strike or an investigation of a business concern, and a congregation will feel inclined to declare itself on the matter. But wisdom is here needed. Many a group has broken itself by joining one side in a dispute. Whatever a church does must be free from class feeling. It may, and should, stand for the human values involved. As a church it had better go no further than this. Individuals of course will need to do more. They must deal with plans for working out the situations. The church as such must trust such questions to the wisdom of the persons involved. Her concern is to see the values Jesus put uppermost made first.

The solving of the economic problem is not easy. A Christian industrial and business order cannot come without a struggle. Misunderstandings will occur. Opposition within and without will be met. But only as the church resolutely faces the economic situation and consistently practices and upholds the ideal of the supreme worth of man can a Christian order emerge. If Christ is to be in every bank and factory and store, the church must put him there.

For Further Investigation

1. The effect upon the home when both husband and wife are gainfully employed.
2. What can the church do to check gambling on the stock markets?
3. What is the message of Jesus concerning child labor?
4. What is the church doing to stop unemployment?
5. How is the farmer affected by the mechanization of life?
6. What is the effect of the present widespread desire for wealth upon the church and its program?

Bibliography

Coe, George A.: The Motives of Men, chaps. xv, xvi, Scribners.
Mathews, Shailer: Jesus on Social Institutions, chap. v, Macmillan.
Kent, C. F., and Jenks, J. W.: Jesus' Principles of Living, chap. vi, Scribners.
Smith, G. B.: Principles of Christian Living, chaps. xv and xvi, The University of Chicago Press.
Kent, C. F.: The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus, chap. xx, Scribners.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAM AND THE HOMELAND

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 5:9.—Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

MATTHEW 22:39.—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

MARK 16:15.—And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What effect does a shifting population have upon a congregation? What effect does tenantry have?
2. How could the churches of a city make a united approach to urban problems?
3. What progress has the Negro made as to education, business, home owning?
4. What contribution can the various racial groups found in America make to our civilization?
5. What definite measures are now being taken to bring world peace and interracial good will?
6. What bearing does a divided church have upon a solution of these problems?

SOME PROBLEMS OF OUR CIVILIZATION

The problems of our land, like those of every other country, concern human beings and their relationships with one another. These problems are made more acute by the diverse racial and national elements that make up our population. The constant migrating and intermingling of these different groups develop points of friction that occasionally reach the explosion point. A conglomerate people are likely to have their full share of difficulties.

A mixed population.—Once America contained vast stretches of uninhabited land. The problem then was to occupy these acres with tillers of the soil and to dot them with homes. The normal increase in population was not sufficient so liberal immigration policies were pursued. The immigrant seeking a new home was more than welcome.

The alluring opportunities of the new world and the cordial attitude toward the newcomer brought hundreds of thousands to the shores of America. The high mark was reached in 1907 when 1,285,000 entered the United States. Over a million a year seemed to be the contribution of Europe and other continents to this country.

Even America with her vast territory and many industries could not take care of so many immigrants. The saturation point was reached. And at the close of the World War when America seemed about to be flooded with immigrants, America reversed her policy of welcoming all comers. The Immigration Act of 1921 limited the number of immigrants to three per cent of the number of foreign-born persons of each nationality residing in the country as revealed by the census of 1910. This restricted the total to 385,000. In 1924 another act was passed which limited the immigration to two per cent of the resident population of any group as shown by the census of 1890. The obvious objectives sought in these two acts were a restriction of immigration and a limitation of the various groups entering to the proportions then existing in the American population. America as an asylum for all who cared to come no longer existed.

This reversal in policy was brought about in part by the change in the character of the immigrant coming to this continent. Many had habits and ideals foreign to those of this country. Their cultures were different. A frequent result of this commingling of diverse races and cultures at every street corner was conflict and strife. Amalgamation did not keep pace with immigration. As a result, America sought to stop the inflowing stream.

A shifting population.—"Young man, go West" was once good advice and indicated the general trend in the movement of population in this country. An overpopulated eastern community found relief by migrations westward. Failures found new opportunities. The ambitious realized their longings in the virgin West.

But this westward movement has ceased. No broad acres are inviting occupants. A few tracts wait upon costly reclamation projects, but these will give homes to relatively few. The westward trend has practically peopled every available acre.

This does not mean, however, a stationary population. American people are anything but fixed. The complaint one hears as he goes from place to place is, "The people in this community don't stay. They live here for a few months or years and move on." The trend of population has been from rural and village centers to the large towns and cities. Certain sections favored with an unusual climate have growing populations. Seasonal work causes important shifts in groups within each year. Numerous business organizations with branches in various centers frequently move many of their employees. The increase in tenantry makes persons less attached to a place and more willing to accept some opportunity elsewhere. And millions within the summer months are on ''wheels.'' The vacationer's name is legion. This constant moving of persons is a factor that churches must take into account.

The city problem.—The massing of population in the city is a striking feature of our day. There seems to be no end of building skyscrapers. ''A new sky line every morning'' is the motto of many a city. Apartment hotels rise to dizzy heights. Three-story flats fill miles of blocks. Families are located not only by streets but by floors. Thousands, even millions, of persons are crowded onto a few square miles of land. The city is a mass of people.

The population within a city is by no means stationary. Tenantry is common. The scant furniture required to maintain an apartment makes moving easy and relatively inexpensive. Populations within a city shift almost overnight. A settlement house a few years ago was serving ten thousand Russians in a section of a large city. Today it is in the midst of a negro population . In that same metropolis a Jewish community institution is for sale. It must move to keep near the center of the group it would serve. The moving van is prominent on the streets of the great cities.

These congested centers have other problems. Nearly every city has its ''slum'' and ''foreign'' quarters. Municipal government in the United States is notoriously corrupt. Tenantry and the apartment house make difficult the maintenance of home life. Juvenile delinquency, crime and vice thrive, the jar and discordance of diverse peoples and cultures in proximity bring difficulties that find varied expressions, the extreme form of which is mob violence.

The total effect of city life is to catch one up into a whirl of activities of superficial and secondary value. The constant moving of persons, and particularly of family groups, makes institutions hard to maintain. The problem of the church, therefore, is doubly difficult. To call a city from its quest of the artificial to the rugged virtues of Christian living and to do this through an institution that must feel the effect of a constantly resolving and dissolving membership, is the difficult task the Christian movement faces in urban centers.

The rural problem.—The extolling of the virtues of farm life has not stopped a steady exodus from rural and village communities. In 1920 the farm population was 31,614,000, or about thirty per cent of the population of the United States. January 1, 1927 the United States Department of Agriculture estimated the farm population to be 28,000,000. This indicates a loss in seven years of more than three millions. It is reported that 20,000 young men come annually to St. Louis. The adventurous and ambitious leave the rural sections to seek the more numerous opportunities the larger centers seem to offer. Consequently, many who would have become aggressive leaders have been lost to rural life. Machine farming has had its effect; fewer men are needed to maintain the quantity of production.

Tenantry is working against a stable home life. Once the social center was frequently found in the church and the home was often a meeting place for social groups. But now there is no center. There are centers—in club and lodge and school. Thus rural life is suffering from many disintegrating forces.

The seclusion of the old-time farm home, free from the temptations of the bizarre city, has gone. The world is at its door. It is within. The newspaper and magazine come daily. The telephone and the radio bring in the whole world. And the automobile takes the farm family to the distant city for an afternoon or evening. The superficial values, so emphasized in city life, make their appeal now to the rural family.

The moving away from the farm with its consequent depletion of leadership and the migrations within rural populations which make institutional life so hard to maintain, as already pointed out, constitutes no insignificant problem. How can this shifting rural population be brought under the control of the message of Jesus? This is a question the church must answer.

UNDERPRIVILEGED GROUPS

Every nation has groups which enjoy fewer privileges than those possessed by the rank and file of its citizens. This condition may be due to no fault of the groups concerned nor to any living person. But their lack of opportunity is nevertheless real.

The Negro.—Negroes comprise one-tenth of the population of the United States. Nearly eighty per cent of them live in the twelve states that are distinctly southern. However, the World War period saw hundreds of thousands of them migrate to northern and western centers. Whatever problem the Negro constitutes is not the problem of any one section; the problem belongs to all.

For many Negroes life is a struggle against poverty and discrimination. Numerous professions and occupations are closed to them. School opportunities have not always been adequate. The youth of most of them is spent in poverty. For one of them to rise to affluence and position is to overcome gigantic odds.

Yet in spite of these adverse circumstances the Negro race has made remarkable progress. Illiteracy has been reduced. Schools for higher education have been established. A professional leadership for their own race is being developed. And above all a consciousness of their own worth and of the possible contribution they may make in the world is being developed. The Negro has made enviable progress.[1]

The Mexican.—Lured by higher wages and steadier employment, thousands of Mexicans have come into the United States. It is estimated that 1,200,000 Spanish-speaking persons reside in five states in the Southwest.[2] Our Mexican neighbors are found at work in construction projects, in maintaining roadbeds for railways, in farming where handwork is still a large element, and in various other lines of this nature. Many of the men have families. Their homes so frequently are demounted box cars. They live in isolated sections of city and town. Without contact with the better elements of American life, they lack a necessary influence for their highest development.

---

[1] *Survey of Service,* Disciples of Christ, chapter xi. [2] See Shriver, William P., *What Next in Home Missions,* p. 43, and *Survey of Service,* Disciples of Christ, chapter viii.

The Indian.[3]—When the European came to American shores, he found the land occupied by roving bands of Indians. He did not hesitate to dispossess these people of their territory. It was inevitable that the primitive culture of the Indian should give way to the more aggressive culture of the white man. With the occupancy of the land, the government had to decide what should be done with the Indian. The policy finally adopted was to place the Indians on "reservations" and make them wards of the government.

There are about 350,000 Indians in this country today. They are scattered over the entire United States. They are a challenge to the nation. While some tribes have accepted Christianity, many have had no adequate presentation of the gospel to them. In a way, they should be the first obligation of the Christian forces of the nation. In reality they have been made almost the last.

The need of the Indian is great. His needs are economic, hygienic, and religious. Fully a third of them have never had a vital contact with Christianity. Their exploitation by the white man has not been conducive to a favorable attitude toward the Christian religion. But their need of Christ remains.

The Highlanders.[4]—Three million descendants of Scotch Covenanters live on a strip of land 200 miles wide and a thousand miles long through parts of Virginia, West Virginia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia. For 200 years they have lived in primitive fashion untouched by the people who have inhabited the valleys and regions beyond. A large per cent are illiterate, the land is too poor to make education or luxuries possible, and life is largely a struggle for existence.

---

[3] *Survey of Service,* Disciples of Christ, chapter ix. [4] *Survey of Service,* Disciples of Christ, chapter x.

These people have many potentialities. They possess many virtues. Their contribution to American life awaits economic, educational and religious advantages.

Immigration centers.—In addition to these special groups are many others, made up of immigrants from other countries. Practically every city has a cluster of them while certain areas of the country, such as mining regions, have attracted these people by hundreds of thousands. So one could go on to describe innumerable groups that are part of the population of this country.

All of these people have needs. Some are illiterate. Some are unacquainted with American ideals. All of them need the refining and uplifting influence of the Christian religion. America cannot claim to be Christian until these centers of foreign-born are brought to acknowledge Jesus Christ.

The foregoing paragraphs are by no means an adequate description of the need that exists in this country. They will serve, however, to give an idea of the bigness of the task to make this nation thoroughly Christian. These underprivileged groups dare not be neglected. To do so is to menace the Christianizing of the nation.

NATIONAL ISSUES

Prohibition.—Since the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act, the United States has faced one of the most persistent and vicious attacks ever made upon its laws. Wealthy industries put out of business have made constant fight and have contributed millions to break down the law. Underworld leaders have found illicit traffic in liquors particularly profitable and have brought disrepute to the national prohibition laws. A certain section of the press has been vociferous in its denunciation of prohibition. Movies, magazines, novels and other avenues for developing opinion are operating to create a mind-set against national prohibition.

Aside from the effect on national morale of a successful disregard of the prohibition laws, there is a moral aspect to the question. A repeal or even an increase in the alcoholic content allowed will result in but one thing—more drinking. And more drinking means more poverty, more accidents, more disease, more immorality, and more wrecked homes. Only a few profit by the liquor traffic. The rank and file are impoverished, financially and morally.

This is a problem the followers of Christ must deal with. A sober nation is requisite to a Christian nation. Respect for law is at the foundation of reverence for God and things sacred. The message of Jesus will never be heard by a drunken people. Christianity has everything at stake in the prohibition issue.

The movement for peace.—The havoc wrought in the World War is but a foretaste of what may be expected should such a calamity come upon the world again. The loss of life as a result of the war is estimated at 30,000,000. The loss in dollars runs into the billions. And fear has come into the hearts of nations. More money is being spent for armaments now than there was before the World War. And eighty-two cents of every dollar of our national income is spent on war and preparation for war. The human race cannot afford the repetition of another world cataclysm.

The movement for peace has been halting at best. The organizations seeking to develop sentiment for it, while numerous, have been somewhat unrelated. The World War is too recent for men to be willing to trust to peace. War seems too great a possibility. Peace comes slowly and only with great effort.

The pacts outlawing war have been a great moral victory. How seriously they will be taken remains to be seen. The difficulty with which armaments are limited, to say nothing of being reduced, indicates the seriousness of the task of making the pacts effective. To make these agreements binding in the face of every international situation which may arise, will require a mighty sentiment for peace and good will.

Race relations.—To learn to live together is the supreme problem of life. The question of race relations is at heart a matter of setting up satisfactory relationships among members of different races. With the mixing of racial groups as it is found on this continent, the problem becomes acute and of large proportions.

With every tenth person in the United States a Negro and with the millions who have come within the past generation from Europe and the Orient, the American melting pot has been filled to overflowing. Race difficulties are inevitable. The situation invites them.

The race problem has been made more acute by certain writers who have professed to see a color peril. They have contended for Nordic supremacy. They think they see coming an interracial war with the white race hopelessly outnumbered. They are calling upon brothers of their own color to be ready to defend themselves. But the data upon which they base their statements scarcely coincide with the facts.[5] And their outcries serve only to sharpen antagonisms and to multiply points of friction.

The race problem has been greatly augmented since the World War by a sharpening of race consciousness. Races no longer desire to lose their identity. They are taking pride in their achievements. This is a hopeful sign, but it is one that accentuates conflicts where discrimination and points of difference exist.

The race issue is one of national consequence. So scattered are the races over the country that nearly every community has contact with some group. The race problem is almost universal. Indirectly it is. It must be faced to save disaster. A single newspaper in a city may so stir up the populace against a racial group that mob violence results. Interracial relations must be brought under control of reason and good will or the outcome will be what no one desires.

---

[5] See *Christianity and the Race Problem* by J. H. Oldham.

The foregoing paragraphs are not intended to be a description of American civilization. At best they are but brief sketches of existing problems. They do not show the reverse side of the picture, for there are many forces working for a way out of these difficulties. The church is aroused. Civic groups are active. Special organizations are powerful and numerous. A nation is becoming aware of its need.

What Jesus Taught

The follower of Jesus, as he faces these questions, is anxious to know what the Master taught concerning them. Does he speak to this complex seething life of America?

The human race is one brotherhood.—At no time did Jesus set one race or class above another. That he should go first to the house of Israel does not prove that he regards the Jew superior in the eyes of God. They were the ones who would be expected to receive his message. He even indicated once that there would be those who would come from afar and occupy seats in the Kingdom while some of the sons of Abraham would be left without.[6] Always with him men of all races were potential sons of God and as such were of infinite worth.

Jesus taught that one should love his neighbor as he loved himself.[7] And in the parable of the good Samaritan, he gave rather a broad meaning to the term neighbor.[8] A neighbor was determined by need, not by class or racial lines.

In his contacts with people, Jesus made no discrimination against races. The centurion received his help without question.[9] The Syrophoenician woman was blessed at his hands.[10] He abode with the Samaritans.[11] Human need, not race or clan, brought what he had to offer.

---

[6] Matthew 8:11, 12. [7] Matthew 22:39. [8] Luke 10:37.

Jesus was ever the friend of the underprivileged. The widow of Nain, the sinful woman, the man with the withered arm, the blind, the sick, the lame, the demoniac—these were the ones to whom he ministered. Indeed, this ministration to the needy he made the standard for judging a life.[12]

And the Great Commission with its urge to go to *all* the nations expresses what is implicit in the gospel of Christ. His followers have had laid upon them the unction of a great message—a message that is meant for men of every color. To discriminate because of race is to violate the spirit of the gospel message.

Jesus and peace.—The war makers have a sorry time when they try to bring Jesus to their defense. His specific utterances on peace are not numerous. He did not address himself to the question of international strife. The statements he made must be distorted to justify war. True, he said: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."[13] But this cannot be turned into a justification of war. From the statements that follow it is evident that Jesus was referring to divisions of loyalty that would follow as a result of some accepting and some rejecting him.

At another time he told his disciples to sell their cloaks and buy swords.[14] But the next moment he refused to be defended by the sword. Put up the sword, he said, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."[15] There is no justification for war in either of these passages.

---

[9] Matthew 8:5-13. [10] Mark 7:26-30. [11] John 4:40, 41. [12] Matthew 25:31-46. [13] Matthew 10:34.

On the other hand, in indicating those entitled to be called blessed, Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God."[16] But above all the statements that Jesus may have made, stands his emphasis upon the supreme worth of man. War takes a fearful toll in human life. It ruthlessly tramples personality under foot. Women and children suffer as well as men. Bayoneting, gassing, maiming, and killing are not fit occupations for children of God. The gory battlefield and the sacredness and worth of man are irreconcilable. By no distorting of Scripture and stretching of the imagination can it be established that Jesus put his approval upon war.

Jesus and prohibition.—With this question, as with so many others, one cannot resort to Scripture texts to discover Jesus' attitude. This question must be decided in the light of his teaching concerning the worth of man. Anything that destroys personality is to be condemned. And when the liquor traffic with its history of broken homes, wrecked lives, and ruined hopes, stands for judgment, there is no doubt as to the position of Jesus. Whatever stood in the way of an abundant life, he opposed. His spirit condemns the whole liquor business.

[14] Luke 22:36. [15] Matthew 26:52. [16] Matthew 5:9.

The Program of the Church

As one takes a panoramic view of American life, noting the waste places and the needy areas, the national issues, and the strength of the forces of evil, he may well pause to ask what the church should and can do. The function of the church is to make Jesus Christ known and to get his way of life accepted in all the areas of human living. What these neglected groups need is Christ. Nation-wide issues can be solved only by the introduction of his spirit. His attitude of good will must come to dominate city life. The rural sections have the same need. The gospel must come to live in all of human relationships. And to this end the church must work.

Problems within the church.—That the Christian forces have not adequately faced these problems in American life, will be taken for granted. The Christian movement has been too badly divided to make a united attack upon the situations at its door. Its interest has been in creedal statements and items of belief. Its energies have been spent in their defense. It has, therefore, been concerned with Christianity not as a way of life so much as a way of belief. Its emphasis has been upon differences rather than upon those items that are common to all. The result has been an evasion of many problems of human living that exist at the very door of the church.

This condition has thwarted the development of any sense of program. The idea that this whole nation should be Christianized has never gone beyond the dream stage. There has consequently been no strategy in the development of the policies and programs of the various religious bodies. Statesmanship in building the Kingdom has been at a premium. Too long have the many religious groups spent their energies in stressing their differences and in magnifying their peculiarities rather than in uniting their resources in a practical program of reconstruction and service.

However, the folly of this procedure is beginning to be seen. Church bodies are now more inclined to find those elements they hold in common and to unite their strengths in co-operative programs of service. Mission boards are making common cause. The Home Mission Council is made up of the representatives of thirty-eight Protestant home mission boards that represent twenty-seven communions. It promotes fellowship and co-operation among the Christian organizations doing missionary work in the United States. The Missionary Education Movement represents thirty-five boards of home and foreign missions from sixteen religious bodies and provides a co-operative avenue for the preparation and dissemination of missionary literature. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America affords an agency through which twenty-eight religious bodies are working. The International Council of Religious Education furnishes an avenue through which over forty communions are uniting in the co-operative phases of religious education. The National Commission of Protestant Church Women, organized in Buffalo, New York, June, 1928, represents an attempt to unite all the women's groups of the Protestant churches in common effort. Mrs. Josephine M. Stearns, general secretary of the Commission, said, "For the Christian women of America the National Commission of Protestant Church Women will provide a voice, a comradeship in service, a federation of activities and an interchange of plans and methods.''[17]

These and other agencies represent a growing conviction on the part of the religious forces of America that the Christian movement must present a united front. There is no other way to redeem American life and make it Christian except through co-operative effort. Some day, let us hope, there will be strategy and statesmanship in the attempt of the churches to make a Christian America.

Church placement.—The placement of local churches is a part of the problem and strategy of Christianizing our land. They should never be placed so as to become competing units. Their locations should permit the wisest and most effective use of resources. Only as there is co-operation on the part of religious bodies can duplication and waste be avoided.

In many rural and village centers, there are too many churches. Programs are often competitive. Most of them are unrelated. The consequence is an ineffective presentation of the gospel. In other communities there is not a single church. The gospel message is not heard. And life in these centers moves on almost as though the man of Galilee had never lived.

The placement and maintenance of churches in urban centers involves many difficulties. The fluid life of the city makes every church insecure. What is a strong congregation today may be a mission point tomorrow. A residential church this year is a down-town church a decade hence. A sudden migration and the character of a congregation's membership changes. To maintain churches in a city is not easy, to say nothing of aggressively taking it for Christ.

---

[17] *World Call,* December, 1928. Used by permission.

Cities should be dealt with as units. Churches should be placed in strategic centers. The strong should support the weak. Each congregation left to itself will result in the death of too many of them. A co-operative program in church placement and maintenance is essential to an effective presentation of the gospel to the great city.

The Christianizing of our complex city life, of our shifting rural population, of the waste places in our civilization, is a staggering problem. To make American life with its drive for money, its worship of power, and its love of luxury a truly Christian nation seems at times an impossibility. And a divided Christendom can never make it such. The Christian groups must unite in their planning and efforts. The building of the Kingdom of God is an enterprise in which all must join to make it successful.

Whatever the churches can do to bring about world peace and interracial good will, must be done co-operatively. No single communion is sufficiently strong to make a very effective impression. Only as the united voice of Christendom is heard will the nation give heed.

What the Local Church Can Do

Inform its members.—Not of least importance, and one of the first things a church group can do, is to inform its membership of these problems. If it is situated in a city center, it should know the problems peculiar to urban churches. If it is a rural group, it should know the problems such churches face. All should be informed with respect to the needs of underprivileged groups. All should understand the moral issues that confront the nation. An informed membership is the beginning of a functioning church.

The usual means may be used for giving this information. The sermon will be particularly effective. Classes of young people and adults may study special fields and questions. Speakers who have had experience with many of these problems will be available to many churches and should be invited to come before the membership. Forums may be conducted. Efforts may be made to get literature bearing on these questions read and studied. In addition to these many other ways no doubt will be discovered and used.

Face its own situation.—The second thing a local church should do is to face the realities of its own situation. If it is a rural church, it should know the trends of the community in which it is placed. If an urban congregation, it should be aware of the drifts of city life. It should know the forces playing upon it or against it. Will the population shift and undermine the strength of the organization? Will the business section expand and engulf it? Will members of other races come into the community? These questions indicate realities which congregations should discover and meet.

Help needy groups.—The church should be aware of the needy who may exist within its reach. If there are groups of poor, of seasonal workers, of foreign born, or other classes that have a special need, the church should know and do what it can for them. In this service it may unite with other congregations and work jointly, or it may work through the local, organized charities. The situation should determine the policy.

Cultivate interracial good will.—A local church can cultivate the spirit of good will toward all races. It should try to know the contribution each race can make. If any of these racial groups are in the community, the church can seek some contacts that will develop friendship and good will. Care should here be used, for any contact the church may make should not be on a patronizing basis. And it should contribute to a sharing of the best both races have to offer. How much the church can do for these groups will be determined by resources of money and leadership.

Offerings.—Offerings for the work done by one's communion in distant needy places and for underprivileged groups may be regularly promoted and taken. Whatever may be said about the taking of missionary offerings, the fact remains that they are effective means for informing a congregation of the needs of the world.

Develop sentiment.—The local church can help develop a sentiment for world peace, for interracial good will, for sobriety, and for respect for law. This is no inconsiderable factor when one considers how potent are the forces that are developing sentiment against them. Resolutions by church groups, and even local churches, are not made in vain. A local church can be a mighty influence in creating an attitude that is Christlike among all the groups that make up our civilization.

The church of America has a great task before it. Every needy group, every foreign person, every hater of another race, every agitator for war, every opponent of law constitutes a challenge. Only by intelligent, persistent effort can the church make the spirit of Christ pervade and dominate our civilized life.

FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. Trends in population as revealed by the 1930 census.
2. How should the program of a city church differ from that of a rural church?
3. How prevent over-churching in rural and city sections?
4. What are the criteria for helpful contacts between members of different races?
5. The effect of American immigration policies upon international attitudes.
6. How develop a ''will to peace''?
7. Outline a practical program by which churches may meet an emergency, such as the prohibition crisis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cavert, Samuel McCrea: The Adventure of the Church, chap. iv, Missionary Education Movement and Council of Women for Home Missions.

Oldham, J. H.: Christianity and the Race Problem, George H. Doran Company. Survey of Service, Disciples of Christ.

Van Kirk, Walter W.: Highways to International Good Will, The Abingdon Press.

Shriver, William P.: What Next in Home Missions, Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement, New York. The World Mission of Christianity, International Missionary Council, New York.

Survey of Service, Disciples of Christ, Christian Board of Publication.

CHAPTER XII

INTO ALL THE WORLD

SCRIPTURES

MARK 16:15.—And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

ACTS 1:8.—And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What to you is the greatest missionary imperative?
2. What distinguishes the Christian religion from other religions?
3. What are the essentials in a missionary program for a local church?
4. Should a country be thoroughly Christian before it sends missionaries to other lands?
5. Does a non-Christian religion have a right to send missionaries to America or England?
6. What is the chief obstacle to the spread of the gospel? What are the obstacles in American life?

The followers of Christ have always worked upon the assumption that they had the right to carry the gospel message to all peoples, even to members of other religious faiths. Not only have they assumed the right to present the gospel to everyone, but they have deemed it their obligation. In recent years this assumption has been sharply challenged. Indeed, some would have us believe that it is unwarranted arrogance to try to induce a person whose religion is satisfying to him to forsake it for another. It is therefore necessary these days for the proponent of the missionary cause to justify the movement to evangelize other religious groups.

The final justification of any religion is to be found in what it does for its believers. Does it give them a better understanding or appreciation of God? Does it bring men into closer relationships with him? Does it give men a true evaluation of themselves? Does it help them to face their world with more confidence and to discover deeper satisfactions in human living? Are they enabled to live more harmoniously and helpfully with one another? Are they strengthened to meet the crises of life? Are they helped to live according to the highest ethical standards that men can discover? These questions express the criteria by which a religion should be measured. ''By their fruits'' is the standard for evaluating religions as well as individuals.

Can these questions be answered affirmatively with respect to the Christian religion?

God as force or principle or tyrant is not half so impelling as the heavenly Father of Jesus. An approachable, loving God draws men. A God who notes the fall even of a sparrow speaks of the infinite worth of man and thereby dignifies human living. Such a God means that at the heart of the universe there is some good purpose. Men may therefore walk assured that life will eventuate in something wholly desirable.

And Christ, who has revealed this Father and is the highest expression of him the human race knows, somehow imparts to men a power to live in a manner they could not otherwise do. Men are enabled to meet life's crises with hope of success. Power to live with supreme regard for others is given. And above all men are helped to look into the future confident and unafraid.

With all that is admirable in the many religions of the world, there is no faith that helps men to live and face their world quite as the Christian religion does. And moreover none of them has been able to give to its followers the power to live the ethical ideals it teaches. At this point the Christian religion is unique. The simple, righteous living of the missionary family in the midst of much that is debasing has been the marvel of many persons of other faiths. The power of the spirit of Christ to transform a life that is vile to one that is wholesome has been demonstrated again and again. It is this power to transform life that constitutes the greatest apologetic for Christian missions.

THE MISSIONARY IMPERATIVE

Origin in Jesus.—The missionary imperative has its origin in Jesus, in his total message and impact upon the world, and in the nature of Christian living itself. It was characteristic of Jesus to share. "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth,"[1] he told his disciples. Wherever he went, he gave of himself freely. And this spirit of sharing he imparted to his followers. They gave their very lives for his cause. He desired that all should share in the abundant life. The final judgment of man, as he pictured it, would be based on how those who *had,* shared with those who had not. The missionary imperative, therefore, is implicit in the nature of Christian living.

Many have relied upon the command of Jesus, as variously recorded,[2] for the justification of the missionary enterprise. They have deemed this to be an order which must be obeyed. For many this has been sufficient. It is the only imperative they demand.

---

[1] Luke 22:27.

Some students of historical criticism hold that these statements, called the Great Commission, are not the actual words of Jesus but that they represent a later interpretation of his spirit and purpose. Even should this prove to be true, it does not alter the fact that these expressions truly represent the purport of Jesus' ministry. The gospel must be shared with the whole world. To do less is to be untrue to the essential character of Christian living.

Declaration of the Jerusalem Conference.—The Jerusalem Conference of 1928 declared: "Our true and compelling motive lies in the very nature of the God to whom we have given our hearts. Since he is love, his very nature is to share. Christ is the expression in time of the eternal self-giving of the Father. Coming into fellowship with Christ we find in ourselves an over-mastering impulse to share him with others."[3]

Early spread of the gospel.—The fascinating story in the Book of Acts describes the irresistible gospel as it moved from its narrow Palestinian setting into the heart of the Roman world. Construed at first as meant only for the Jews, it overcame every resistance and became a religion for all. The enlarging vision of Peter, the aggressive and liberal spirit of the Grecian Jews, and the passionate outreach of Paul set the religion of Jesus Christ in universal terms.

---

[2] See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8-10. [3] The Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message*, I, p. 405-6. Used by permission.

"And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" epitomizes the story of an irrepressible gospel. The religion of Jesus bursts all bounds of geography, race or class.

The Christian religion must be shared.—It is a strange fact that the Christian religion must be shared in order to keep it alive. Missionary passion and expression are necessary to the life of the church. The Christian movement is essentially an enterprise. An anti-missionary group languishes and frequently dies. The saying of Jesus, "he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it,"[4] is a strange truth, but it is a truth. Only as the church loses itself in a great missionary service will it find its life enlarged and enriched. Sharing is an expression of Christian living. When sharing ceases, the Christian spirit dies.

PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT WORLD TASK

The world task is by no means an easy one. There are difficulties that inhere in it. Just to proclaim the gospel in every land is no small achievement. To declare it to every person is a larger undertaking and one not yet accomplished. To Christianize every phase of the world's life, the ultimate goal of the Christian religion, is an enterprise of huge proportions. Add to this the necessity of a continual reinterpretation of the missionary task and one may have some idea of the problems confronting the missionary cause.

[4] Matthew 10:39.

Administration.—Many difficulties are involved in the administration of world missions. The distance between the source of supplies and the operations of the missionaries makes supervision difficult. Problems on the mission fields may arise and grow to large proportions before information concerning them can be gotten to the boards at home. Personnel adjustments are difficult to make. It is hard to keep the supporting churches informed of the numerous changes in conditions on the fields, all of which require modifications in methods of work. Long-range administration at best is expensive. Any world-wide enterprise has problems arising from the distance of its operations.

Racial and national pride.—The days of the World War brought a new spirit into the peoples of the world. Intense feelings of national and racial pride were developed. Peoples began to study their history. They looked for the contributions their civilizations had made to human progress. Each race and nation now has a pride in its past, its present, and its possible future. Each insists on retaining its own culture. No longer does a race desire a different color. It is proud of that which distinguishes it.

As a result of this there has come an extreme sensitiveness to the attitudes of others. Anything that remotely suggests that one is inferior is resented. In all ways nations and races are demanding the treatment accorded equals.

A result among Christian groups in mission lands is a demand for an indigenous church. Any paternalism by missionaries is deeply resented. More and more the Christian churches in these lands are insisting upon the freedom necessary to develop in their own way and especially to be free from the divisions and differences that characterize Western Christianity. The nationals of these lands say they desire Christ, but they would have him without the accretions of occidental civilization.

These attitudes, at once a problem and a blessing, must be taken into account by those who promote the missionary cause.

They are a problem because they make the persons concerned over-sensitive. They are a blessing in that they will help mission churches to come quicker to self-support and will bring out all the good of which these people are capable. Their distinctive abilities will not then be submerged in strange customs. These attitudes are a new element in Christian missions. In making policies and plans to promote the cause of Christ around the world, they must be given careful consideration.

International relations.—The attitudes of governments toward one another, and especially the attitudes of the stronger toward the weaker, constitute an element of no inconsiderable dimensions in modern missions. ''Gestures of war,'' extraterritoriality, Japanese exclusion, and all similar acts and policies are an affront to self-respecting nations. The aggression of modern business in seeking concessions in countries economically under-developed has made smaller and more backward nations suspicious. These acts of aggression have stirred up doubts as to the sincerity of all Western people, including the missionaries and their supporters.

Influence of American life.—American civilization is far from being Christian. In places it is pagan. Its worship of mammon is contrary to the spirit of Christ. Its drive for commercial advantage is often ruthless. Frequently, profits are demanded at the expense of human values. Our race conflicts and class friction are a violation of the principle of brotherhood. Kingdom values are too often made secondary in American life.

Unfortunately, nationals of other countries have identified Christianity with American civilization. What is evil in our life, they have attributed to the failure of the Western church. Christianity, they tell us, has failed in our own nation. And embarrassing questions concerning the sending of missionaries from a country that has failed to Christianize itself have followed.

It is unfortunate, though perhaps inevitable, that more discriminating thinking has not been done at this point. The missionary no doubt has had a glamour about him that made him appear to the people to whom he went to be a personification of Western civilization. He brought to the life of the Christian groups he established many of the economic advantages, the conveniences, and the customs of the Occident. He was not always careful to help the people he served to distinguish between what was Christian and what was pagan in American civilization. And in our own careless parlance we have called our nation Christian and theirs heathen.

This is not to condemn the missionary for not sensing the situation before he did, nor is it to condemn the nationals of these lands for not being more discriminating in their thinking. Nothing is to be gained by shifting the blame. What is needed is a repentance in sackcloth and ashes that America which has had such a superior opportunity to be Christian has failed at so many points. It should never have been necessary for anyone to distinguish between Christianity and American civilization.

This reveals more clearly the fact that home and foreign missions are one and that all lands are mission lands. The world is now so closely knit that what one nation does or thinks or says affects every other country. The division of the missionary enterprise into home and foreign is largely a matter of geography and administration. The problem is one of world evangelization. No nation can live unto itself. The destiny of each is wrapped up in the destiny of all. No nation can redeem others without itself being redeemed. The process of redemption is mutual among the nations.

The meaning of these facts is clear. The church in America cannot effectively take the message of Jesus Christ to other nations without at the same time speaking to her own civilization. If no protest is made by the church against the un-Christian phases of American life, no message to the people of another land will be received. The evangelization of all the nations must be done simultaneously. The world is a unit. Home and foreign missions are one.

Other problems.—In addition to the problems noted above, there are those peculiar to every field. Language, climate, accessibility, stage of development, poverty, customs, and attitude of the government and people may be different in every country. Some of these impede the spread of the gospel. They must all be taken into account when a foreign missionary enterprise is undertaken.

NEW ATTITUDES IN MISSIONARY WORK

The changing conditions in world life and the new attitudes resulting therefrom demand a new approach to the missionary task. The enterprise of world evangelization must take these into account. Modifications will need to be made at certain points.

Laws and customs.—There is a growing conviction that missionaries to other lands must subscribe to the laws of the country to which they go and accept only the protection that it can give. Extraterritorial rights and foreign courts are an affront to a self-respecting nation. For a missionary to accept privileges which his country is forcing upon the people he would serve deprives him of the largest influence and prevents any complete identity with the group he would serve. The missionary dare not be a party to any act of aggression by a stronger against a weaker nation. Only as he becomes one with the people with whom he labors can he bring Christ fully to them.

Once it was quite customary for the missionary to insist that when Christ was accepted the convert forsake his native customs and adopt those of the West. A few years ago the writer met a young man from Burma whose surname was Solomon. Inquiry revealed the fact that there were many families in Burma by the name of Solomon. This man was a third-generation Christian and he said when the missionaries first came to his country that those who accepted Christianity were obliged to give up their native names and customs. It seemed to be the policy of those early missionaries to Westernize as well as Christianize. And apparently it met with no opposition.

Nationals now are not willing to give up their native customs. A young woman recently came to America from India to spend two years in college. She was alert and keen of mind. She was a third-generation Christian. She did not renounce the customs of her people. Her picturesque garb was seen wherever she went. She was proud of her color. She insisted on remaining distinctly Indian.

These incidents illustrate the changed attitude on the part of the citizens of the lands where missionaries have gone. Their feelings must be respected. Any insistence upon changing customs should be restricted to those which are contrary to the spirit of Christ.

Other faiths.—Once Christians thought of other religions as false and iniquitous. They condemned other systems of faith as evil. But now it is seen that these religions have much that is good in them and that an undiscriminating condemnation of them is a harmful policy to pursue.

No religion is entirely wrong. All represent the human struggle to find God and to have fellowship with the divine. Many of them teach noble ethical ideals. They have spiritually fed countless thousands. They have arisen out of human need. An appreciation of all the good in them is the only attitude the Christian should take.

This new attitude was expressed by the Jerusalem Conference as follows: ''Thus, merely to give illustration, and making no attempt to estimate the spiritual value of other religions to their adherents, we recognize as part of the one Truth that sense of the majesty of God and the consequent reverence in worship, which are conspicuous in Islam; the deep sympathy for the world's sorrow and unselfish search for the way of escape, which are at the heart of Buddhism; the desire for contact with Ultimate Reality conceived as spiritual, which is prominent in Hinduism; the belief in a moral order of the universe and consequent insistence on moral conduct, which are inculcated by Confucianism; the disinterested pursuit of truth and human welfare which are often found in those who stand for secular civilization but do not accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour.''[5]

To say that the missionary approach should be made with tolerance and with appreciation of the good in other faiths is not to declare that one religion is as good as another. There are many who would have a sort of syncretism of all religions. But to take this position is to deny that there is any unique element in Christianity. The Jerusalem Missionary Conference frankly faced this question and reported: ''Unless Christianity is essentially and radically different from other religions, unless there is some sense in which it is just right and they are just wrong, then there isn't much to be said for the missionary drive.''[6] If Christianity is just another religion, if it has no unique and superior elements, then the missionary enterprise is more or less of an intruder and a waste of energy and resources.

---

[5] Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message,* I, pp. 410-11. Used by permission. [6] Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message,* I, pp. 410-11. Used by permission.

However, the most effective way to show what is superior in the Christian religion is not by comparative statements on paper nor by public declarations. There must be demonstrations of superior living. The life of the missionary must be above reproach. The church at home must prove its faith. All who profess to be followers of Jesus must indeed travel the high road of genuine Christian living. To fail at this point is equivalent to a denial of the faith.

Missions as sharing.—A recognition of the unique phases of the Christian religion and an insistence upon its superiority at certain points should not make for arrogance. Nor should such an attitude blind us to the possibility of receiving as well as giving in the missionary enterprise.

There is not a people among which missionary work is being done that cannot make a contribution to those who send messengers of the gospel. The Christian movement in these lands has produced great souls whom it would be a blessing to meet. There is much to be received from as well as to be given to the so-called mission lands.

Many now realize that the missionary enterprise should be conducted on a basis of mutuality, of giving and receiving.[7] This principle recognizes the possibility of a contribution from the people to whom missionaries are sent. It means that visitors from these lands may be sent to the West.

The Jerusalem Conference considered this question and declared: "The churches of the West send missions and missionaries of help to the churches of Africa and Asia. We believe that the time is come when all would gain if the younger churches were invited to send missions of help to the churches of Europe and America, that they may minister of their treasure to the spiritual life of those to whom they come."[8]

---

[7] See *Whither Bound in Missions* by Daniel Johnson Fleming, chapter ii.

To promote aggressively a policy of receiving does not mean that the stronger and older churches of the West will give less. Indeed they will need to give more. Whatever group has the greater resources of money and leadership should contribute most to the enterprise. As long as Christ is unknown to countless individuals and his spirit does not prevail in all the relationships of the world's life, he must be shared by those who know him and try to walk his way.

Co-operation.—The missionary task is too big for any one religious body. It is beyond all of them if they work separately. Only as they unite their resources can the task be done. While the message of Jesus has been proclaimed in every land, there still remain untold thousands who have never heard his name. Many areas of life are not yet under his influence. The gigantic task of world missions calls for a united Christendom. The mission boards and the missionaries are learning to co-operate. Many of them would go beyond what their constituencies will permit. In certain areas fields have been allocated and mutual agreements reached in order to avoid all duplication of effort and to eliminate the possibility of competition. In some centers different groups are uniting in the support of schools and various other enterprises. Such co-operation is essential to success in the effort to evangelize the world.

---

[8] The Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message,* I, p. 410. Used by permission.

THE PROGRAM OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

With this sketch of the problems of the world task, its difficulty and intricacy may be seen. There is no easy road to making Christ known to the whole world. Every local church should share in it. Only as local groups become intelligent supporting units will the Great Commission ever be carried out.

Information.—The first step for the local church is to inform its constituency of the missionary task. The reinterpretation which the missionary enterprise has undergone in the past decade should be known by every Christian. The problems involved in revealing Christ to our modern world should be understood.

A local church should have some knowledge of the difficulties faced on every field. It should be well acquainted with the work being done by the boards of its own communion. The names of missionaries and missionary leaders should be familiar. Only as it knows something of the details of missionary work will it fully appreciate the world task.

There are many ways by which a local church may have information of the missionary cause and an interpretation of its problems brought to it. The sermon is one important means, particularly in the matter of interpretation. Classes using the texts prepared by the Missionary Education Movement should be held from time to time. A school of missions may be conducted annually. The reading of missionary literature should be promoted. Every church needs a missionary library. The current missionary magazines should be made available. Missionary pageants and dramatizations may be given. A missionary room can be fitted up. This may contain maps, posters, curios, pictures, and exhibits of work done in the various departments of the church. And above all missionaries on furlough and leaders in the missionary enterprise should be invited to visit the local church, to speak, and to have fellowship. For the church that really desires to be informed regarding the evangelization of the world, there are many ways available.

Enthusiasm.—But a local church needs more than information; it must have enthusiasm for the missionary cause. The Christian movement has made progress through the centuries because of the passionate enthusiasm of its leaders. A Paul, a Luther, a Livingstone, a Shelton have been on fire with a great enthusiasm without which they could not have achieved what they did. The power of enthusiasm is essential in any program of world evangelization. To contend that the local church should be enthusiastic for world missions is but to say it should be in earnest about its work. The world task is too big, too costly, and requires too much sacrifice to be done without enthusiasm.

And the local church must furnish the future leadership of the missionary enterprise. The challenge to serve in this capacity should be made to promising young persons. However, this work should be done intelligently. Only those who are able and willing to qualify should be challenged. Nor should a host of youth be enlisted for a limited number of positions. The local church should be careful not to raise false hopes nor to misdirect a devoted young life. Close touch with missionary leaders who know the needs of the missionary cause should be maintained.

Financial support.—Money is required to spread the gospel. Churches cannot be built, missionaries trained and sent, and men and women supported so that they can give all their time to the work without money. And the local church is the source of supply.

Information and enthusiasm must be accompanied by the raising of funds. Every church should have a system for gathering and disbursing missionary money. Contributions should be regularly made. Everybody should be given a chance to subscribe. The raising of funds for the missionary enterprise is a great trust. It should be done faithfully as unto the Lord, for it is his cause.

THE UNFINISHED TASK

The world with its need represents the unfinished task. The many who have never heard the name of Christ, the underprivileged groups in all civilizations, and the areas of human living not yet under the influence of Jesus in so-called Christian lands are symbols of the need of the world. They are the challenge of our day to the Christian religion.

And Christ must be shared that the abundant life may come to all. He is the need of men everywhere. And to share him is the inescapable duty of everyone who wears his name. In the language of the Jerusalem Conference Report: "We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without him. We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christlike. We cannot be idle while the yearning of his heart for his brethren is unsatisfied. . . . Christ is our motive and Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more.'"[9] So to the ends of the earth and to every phase of human living should be the rallying cry of the church of Jesus Christ.

For Further Investigation

1. What is there to commend in each of the leading religions of the world?
2. What problems are involved in attaining an indigenous church in so-called mission lands?
3. What contribution is made by foreign students in America?
4. What are the educational values in a program of missionary giving?
5. What contributions can the Christian church in the various so-called mission lands make to the Christian church in America?
6. Is a syncretism of all religions to be desired?

Bibliography

Fleming, Daniel Johnson: Whither Bound in Missions, Association Press.
Cavert, Samuel McCrea: The Adventure of the Church, Missionary Education Movement and Council of Women for Home Missions.
Warburton, Stacy R.: Making a Missionary Church, The Judson Press.
The Jerusalem Missionary Conference Report, The Christian Message, International Missionary Council.
Survey of Service, Disciples of Christ, Christian Board of Publication.
High, Stanley: A Waking World, The Abingdon Press.
Soper, Edmund Davison: The Religions of Mankind, The Abingdon Press.
Fortune, A. W.: The Church of the Future, chap. i, The Bethany Press.

---

[9] The Jerusalem Conference Report, *The Christian Message*, I, pp. 406-7. Used by permission.

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries
1 1012 01233 9182

Date Due

N 2 '38			
N 22 '38			
[illegible] 28 '47			
D 26 '47			
[redacted]			
[redacted]			